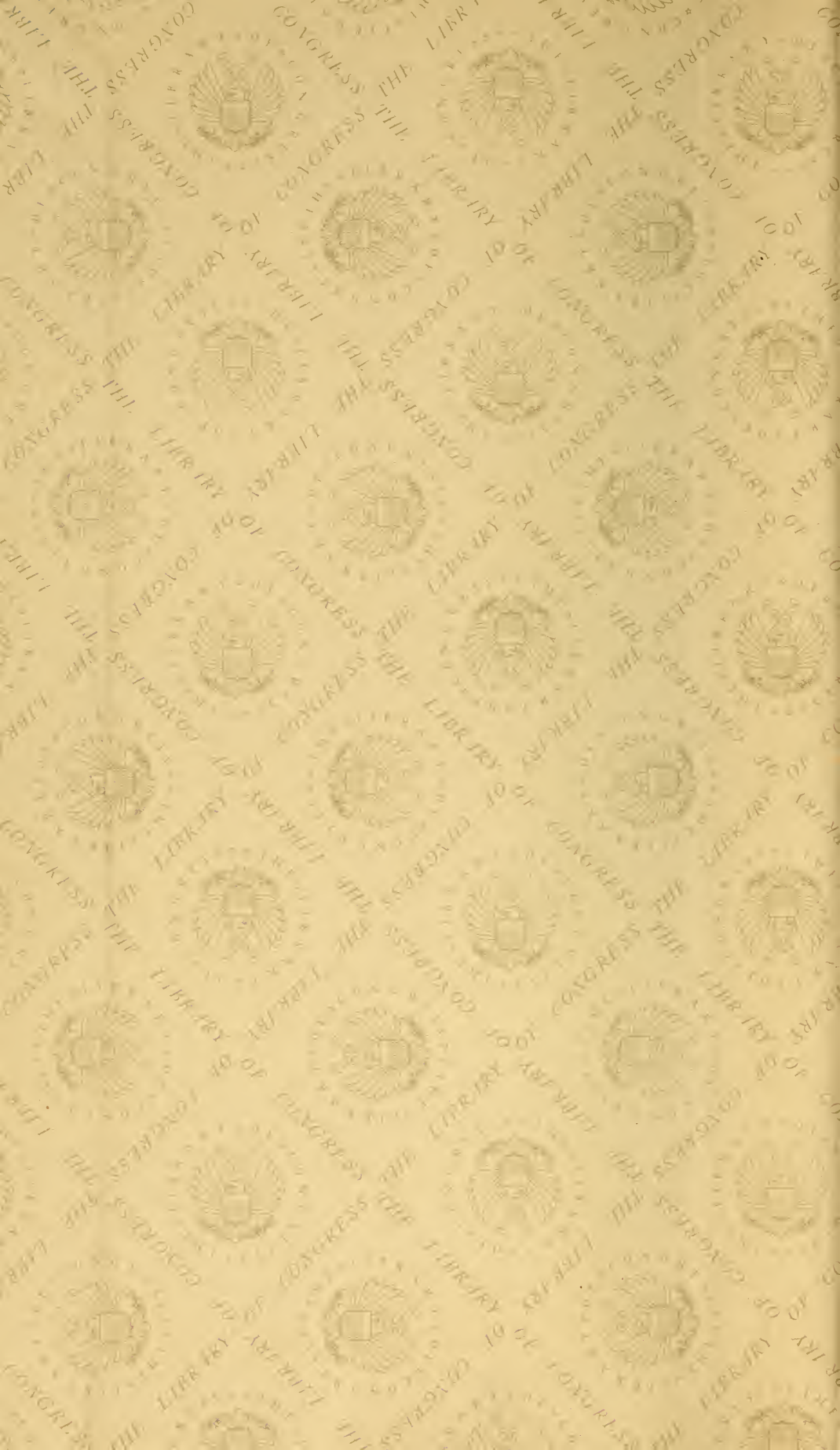


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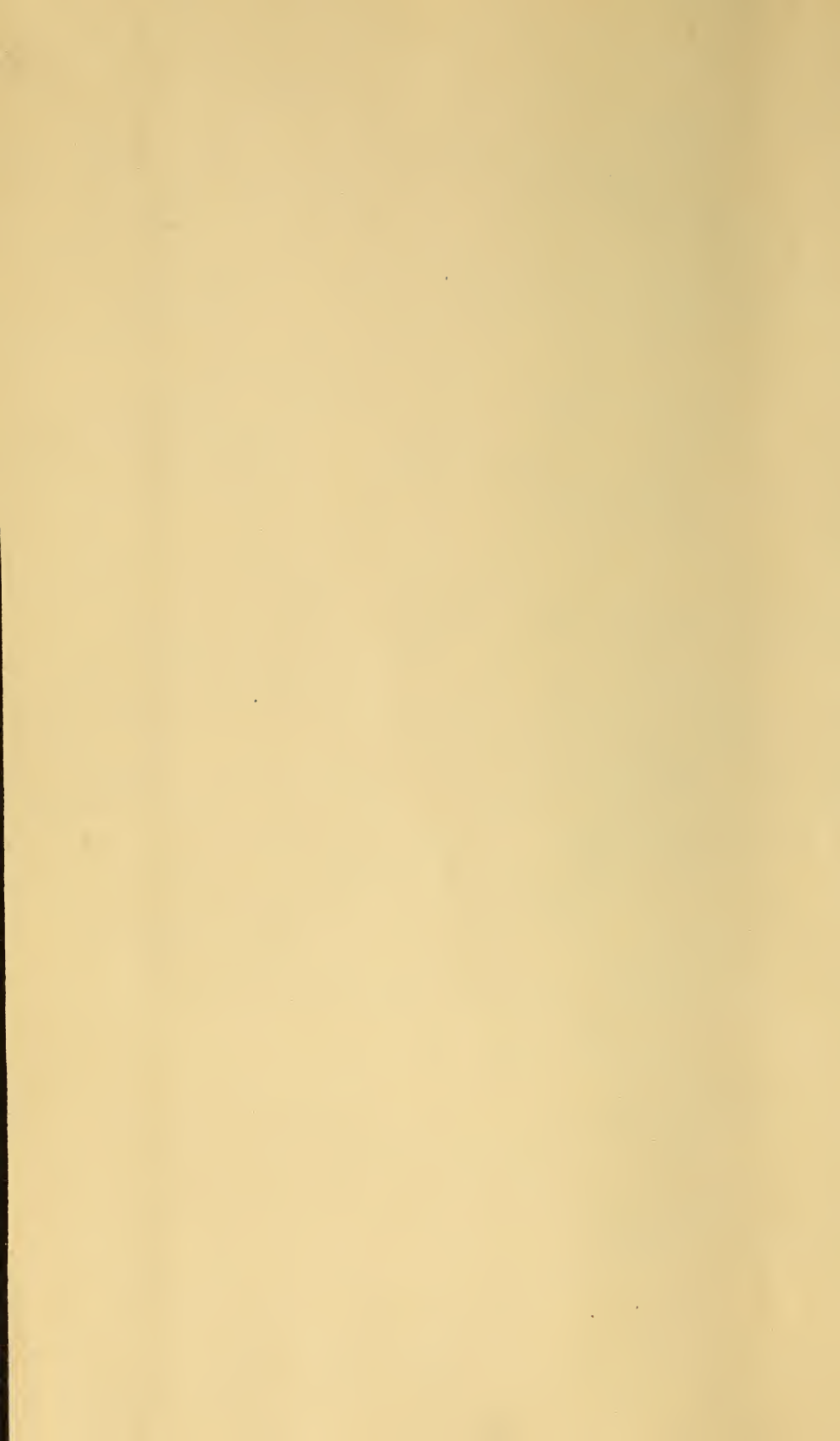


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THE WORLD-RENOWNED

SPIRITUAL MEDIUMS:

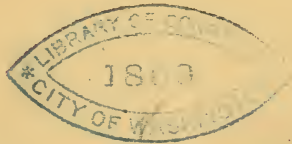
THEIR

BIOGRAPHY, AND ADVENTURES IN EUROPE AND AMERICA.

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TRUTH IS STRANGER THAN FICTION.

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# BIOGRAPHY AND ADVENTURES

OF THE

## DAVENPORT BROTHERS.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### INTRODUCTORY.

PROBABLY no era of the world's history has been so replete with evidences of man's immortality, or so full of testimonies to the fact that this, even with all its amazing achievements, is but the beginning of his career of greatness, whether viewed with reference to a *post mortem* existence, an active life beyond the grave, or the possibilities and probabilities of the race on earth.

Of all that has had a tendency to startle men, revolutionize previous methods of thinking, and to effect radical changes in mind, politics, morals, and religion, unquestionably the greatest, most potent and subtle, wide-reaching and radical, has been that grand movement, whereby, to the minds of millions, man's continued existence after death has been physically and sensibly demonstrated; and among the multitudinous agencies whereby this radical movement and change has been, and still is being, effected, the Brothers Davenport confessedly stand pre-eminent among the many thousands whose mission appears to lie in that direction.

The life, experience, and mission of these two most extraordinary young men constitute the historic task allotted

to the writer by the seemingly accidental circumstance of his having attended one of their *séances*.

The parents of these two strangely-organized men are still living. Ira Davenport, sen., is in body and spirits apparently but little older than his boys; while their mother, I am told, is as fresh and youthful as are most women of but half her years; and she, no doubt, owes this to the fact that through her veins courses a rich stream of healthy, strong, genuine English blood; for she was born in merry England, and, like all other English girls, was brought up, as girls should be, on good, common, solid, healthy food; had plenty of sunshine and fresh air; and was not pampered to death upon sweets and poisonous cakes, candies, and other abominations, as are nine in every ten of American girls. It has been said that there is a streak of meanness in every New-Englander. It may not be so; but, if it is, bad table-management while they are young must be the producing cause.

Mrs. Davenport, sen., is descended from an ancient English family of considerable importance, and can point to an ancestry high on the genealogical scroll.

Emigrating to this country at an early age, she eventually was married, in the year 1839, to Ira Davenport; and from this union sprang the remarkable personages, a portion of the experience of whose lives and deeds it is the writer's task to record in the following pages.

Ira Davenport, sen., was born in the town of Skaneateles, Onondaga County, State of New York, in the year 1816; his ancestry being American, immediately, but remotely purely English. His marriage took place in Chautauqua County, New York, at the date already specified.

Mr. Davenport was for many years connected with the civil department of the State Government; and, latterly, with the police of his native State. At the present time, he is in the enjoyment of a sound constitution, and the health



consequent upon a life devoted to usefulness, and totally dissociated from all habits detrimental to either mind or body: indeed, but few married people present a finer picture of good health, well-preserved youth, and personal calm and happiness, than do these two persons; and doubtless to this pregnant fact, and the legitimate consequences resultant therefrom, the world, and the age in which we live, is indebted for these wonderful children, and the still more wonderful mission to which they have been called, and concerning which the reader's close attention is about to be challenged.

Nearly all peculiar traits of mind, morals, and person, are, to a great extent, transmitted from parents to children; sometimes directly, but more frequently in a modified form and degree. Occasionally, a trait of the parents will become a positive quality and characteristic of the child, sometimes amounting to a passion. Fathers not unfrequently transmit themselves almost wholly to their children; but, more frequently, qualities, passions, virtues, and personal traits are inherited from the mother.

This fact is too well established to require historic statements in proof; and, in the case of the young members of the Davenport family, this great hereditary law is seen to admirable advantage in its mysterious but positive manifestations.

In the female line of the elder Davenport's family, for several generations, powers and qualities bordering on the supernatural have been quite common characteristics; but not so in the male line.

The same peculiarity also marked the female branch of Mrs. Davenport's ancestry; and many strange, and, until recently, quite inexplicable phenomena, of a hyperphysical nature, occurred in the persons and presence of several of her female progenitors, a single illustration of which will suffice as an index to a long category of an entire class of strange and very peculiar occurrences.

One day, while Mrs. Davenport was yet quite young in years, she was engaged in the usual avocations of the kitchen, when the clock suddenly attracted her attention, at which unusual occurrence she very naturally looked up at it, and, while doing so, suddenly heard a voice bidding her observe and particularly mark the hour as indicated by the hands of the clock, for at that precise moment her dear and aged mother had passed from the shores of sublunary time, place, trial, and circumstance, and gone over the dark and mysterious river of death, to commence an endless career of good, use, and beauty, in the limitless fields of God's great eternal shores on the farther side of time.

The young woman, albeit somewhat used to occurrences of a similar or cognate nature, was, nevertheless, quite startled at the event, but felt as if she ought to pay heed to what was so strangely impressed upon her mind; and therefore she obeyed the mystical injunction, and, to her great surprise, subsequently ascertained that her mother had indeed exchanged her mortal for an immortal state at the very moment indicated by the hands of the clock.

How such a thing could come to pass, and what agencies were engaged in the matter, is not the historian's province at this point to either inquire or suggest. But the fact is immutable, and worth a score of theories.

So, also, among Mr. Davenport's ancestry on the female side, many very strange and singular occurrences took place; all tending directly to establish the fact, that, in some mysterious manner, a power not of earth, or of flesh and blood, yet quite loving and intelligent, was intimately associated with, and frequently, and by various methods, indicated, both a deep and friendly interest, and a tender, powerful, and benevolent solicitude.

The female lines, on both sides, were said to be remarkably gifted with healing power over diseased minds and bodies too; and that to such an extent as to occasion no little celebrity in their several neighborhoods.

Mr. Davenport's grandmother, it appears, was also remarkably gifted in several respects; for not only was she a natural nurse and physician, but was also a marked seeress, and as such was noted far and wide. At the unusual age of fourscore years and ten, she had frequent mysterious intimations that this or that person was sick, and needed her aid; whereupon, donning bonnet and shawl, she forthwith sallied out upon her errand and mission of mercy, and never went in vain; for, like many of old, the gift of healing went with her, and blessed health attended on her ministrations.

She very frequently saw and foretold things that subsequently came to pass, and with such accuracy, that her reputation in that respect became firmly established.

Speaking with a person of rare judgment and experience in occult matters, on the very point on which the writer is now treating, the opinion was advanced, that the invisible powers — whether they be of the angelic orders, or disembodied men and women, formerly of and now visiting this earth again for redemptive and educational purposes; in other words, the power behind the veil — had, possibly for generations back, been laboring with and operating on the progenitors of the Davenport youths, for the express purpose of obtaining the very results now triumphantly achieved.

The idea is not an unsound one, and may be and is, probably, based on something far more solid than mere conjecture.

The poet has told us that, —

“ There's a divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough-hew them how we will; ”

and it may be that this family is an illustrative case in point.

Ira Davenport, sen., is himself a seer by nature; as an illustrative instance of which he not long since told the writer of these pages, that, some five and twenty years ago

he frequently had visions of events, places, things, incidents, circumstances, localities, and individuals, which, in his subsequent life and experience, came to pass, and were seen and recognized, even after the lapse of a quarter of a century between the visions and their actual realization.

The last few lines are suggestive of some grand thoughts, which we hope to present in another section of this history.

Another fact of importance in this connection is, that Mr. Davenport's grandmother was raised among the Shaking Quakers; from whom she seceded at the age of eighteen years, and then became a communicant of the Baptist Church, remaining so from that time till her death, which took place at the extraordinary age of a century, and one year over.

The church to which she became attached was held in a village schoolhouse, and was presided over for a period of forty years by a venerable minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, who was known as Elder Darling.

Mrs. Streeter (for that was the old lady's name) always occupied a seat close beside the little elevated desk which served as pulpit: and those who worshipped in the house counted quite as much upon seeing the venerable dame in her accustomed place on Sundays as they did upon seeing Elder Darling himself; nor were they often disappointed in their expectation.

The elder was an eloquent and impassioned preacher, and often in his flights would seem to be scaling the very pinnacles of heaven itself, or as if some sudden and divine energy was pouring into his soul from the flood-gates of the empyrean Jordan. Upon such occasions, when he had announced something startling or unusual, he would turn toward the old lady, and ask, "Is not that true, Granny Streeter?" Whereupon she would, with upturned face, gaze as it were into the deep mysterious sky above her; and at the end of a few moments her face would beam and light

up with an intelligent, rapt expression, and she would audibly reply, "It is," or "It is not," as the case might be: nor did the good elder ever take umbrage, even when she gave her verdict against him.

Frequently, the venerable dame would take Ira into the garden, where she taught him many profound truths of her own knowledge. But, occasionally, the boy would propound questions of a nature too deep and recondite for her limited knowledge to satisfactorily solve: but never did she doubt the possibility of obtaining fitting replies; for, on such occasions, she would gaze skyward, and very soon gave what appeared to be the correct solution by direct inspiration.

Two of Mr. Davenport's sisters were gifted with what the Scotch call second-sight, and the French, clairvoyance; and one of these sisters, Mrs. Green, whom the writer never saw, was represented to him as being a very reliable person among the multitudes of those who claim, but, when put to the direct proof, turn out to be any thing else than really clairvoyant; but Mrs. Green is said to have been a very marked exception to an almost universal rule.

A single instance of her power will here be given:—

One day, there came a lady to Mrs. Green's house to inquire if she could ascertain for her certain desirable knowledge and information respecting—

"Your husband," interposed Mrs. Green.

"Why, how did you know that? How could you tell my secret thought and wish? It's very curious, I'm sure!"

"So it is and may be to you, but by no means so to those who are familiar with something higher than that which usually occupies people's attention,—I mean the every-day business and avocations of life."

Some further conversation on the general topic of supernaturalism and clairvoyance took place, and ended by the visitor observing,—

"Mrs. Green, *if I consent to have you tell me any thing concerning my husband, I will let you know.*"

“*Consent! you consent?* It strikes me, madam, that I, not *you*, must be the *consenting* party, in this instance at least; and, when I do consent, perhaps you will be able to gain some tidings of your absent husband.” And with this the ladies separated, Mrs. Green returning to her household duties; and the “California widow,” as such persons are humorously called, went to consult her friends upon the propriety of “consenting” to be furnished with the very information she was dying to obtain.

Three or four days subsequently, the lady called on Mrs. Green again; and it was clearly apparent, from the subdued tone of her manner, that but little rest had been hers in the interim, for she unhesitatingly begged Mrs. Green to gratify the leading wish of her mind; to which that lady acceded. She took a seat by the side of her anxious visitor, and, concentrating her mind upon the desired object, rapidly passed into the somnolent, and thence into the clairvoyant or ecstatic state, and told the lady that her husband had been absent nine years; that she had not heard from him for over seven years; that he was then at a certain place in California, to which place the inquiring lady must immediately address a letter to him; that he would receive the message, would forthwith write a reply, and inclose a note of fifty dollars in it; that said reply would reach its destination by a certain day; and that thenceforward there would be no estrangement, but only contentment and happiness between those who had been so long separated from each other. Every item of this information, so strangely obtained, proved correct to the very letter; for the lady wrote as directed, and, on the very day named by Mrs. Green, she received the promised envelope, containing a letter from the husband and a fifty-dollar bank-note also.

I mention these and other incidents of a cognate character, for the simple purpose of demonstrating that not only physiological laws have an important bearing upon what is

called "mediumship," but that more subtle laws, those of hereditary descent, also play a prominent part in this matter.

The quality runs in families, and often descends from parent to child. The writer once knew of a Mrs. B——t of Cayuga County, State of New York, in whose presence certain remarkable phenomena are said to have occurred; and this quality descended to a child of hers. One day, two eminent public men, one of whom was a professor of mathematics in a college, came to her from quite a long distance, and, it being Monday, found her actively engaged in the honorable occupation of attending to the family washing; hence, being in *deshabille*, it was impossible for her to comply with their request to afford them an opportunity of investigating the phenomena reputed to occur in her presence. They offered money, and made strenuous appeals; but all to no purpose. Sit she would not, sit she did not; and they were on the point of leaving, when a sudden thought seemed to strike her, and she said, "If you have no objection to sitting in an untidy room, for it is washing-day, you are at liberty to go into my kitchen, where my baby lies asleep in its cradle; and perhaps you may obtain what you are seeking for."

The two gentlemen gladly accepted the offer, went into the room, and took seats alongside of a willow cradle, which had a little canopy over it; and in this cradle her child of six months lay sound and fast asleep. Soon there came rappings upon the canopy above the child's head; and, as these rappings indicated an intelligent power, the strangers soon discovered that they could hold telegraphic and alphabetic communication with the invisible potency, which, whatever it may have been, spelled out by that means the name "La Place," corresponding to that of a celebrated French astronomer and mathematician, long since dead, but by no means forgotten.

An hour passed swiftly away, and the visitors departed, but not until they had received not only various personal tests quite satisfactory to their minds, but also the solution, perfect and complete, of an astronomical and mathematical problem of a complicated nature, and involving deep questions in the differential calculus, that for six months had vainly taxed the brain of the eminent professor there sitting. He had in his efforts made an error, which error was indicated by the unseen power. Of course, the child had nothing to do with the intellectual part of the proceeding, but merely furnished the *viâ*, or means, whereby the true solution was conveyed from a superior mind to his own.

Let us now return to the principal personages of this history.

The Rochester knockings are alleged to have been the first instances recorded or known of the interference of a supermundane intelligent force or power with the affairs of man on earth: but the statement and allegation have long since been proved incorrect; for not only had such and similar phenomenal occurrences been known in various parts of the civilized and barbaric worlds as well, but they were quite common in the Davenport family as early as the year 1846, in Buffalo, N.Y. In describing these occurrences to the writer, both Mr. and Mrs. Davenport called them "raps, thumps, loud noises, snaps, cracking noises, like thieves in the house at the dead hour of the night; and there was no use in trying either to find out what made them, or how they were produced. The thing was quite startling, and very annoying; but what could we do?" All this happened in 1846, and a considerable time before the advent of the Fish and Fox families.

Ira Erastus Davenport, the eldest son of Virtue and Ira Davenport, was born in Buffalo, Erie County, State of New York, on the seventeenth day of September, 1839.

This child was quite remarkable from his earliest infancy.



He appeared to *think* at an age when the majority of children are purely vegetative; and there was an expression of quiet power in his eyes and features, which, while it was a source of pride to his parents, and of attraction and admiration on the part of their friends and acquaintances, yet caused them no little uneasiness, for they feared to lose him. Such, however, was not to be the case; for the child grew rapidly in health, strength, and intelligence.

About fifteen months after the birth of Ira, he had a brother born to him, namely, William Henry, who first saw the light of this world on the first day of February, 1841; and on Dec. 23, 1845, Elizabeth Louisa, their only sister, was born in Buffalo, N.Y., at which place also was William born.

The most extraordinary likeness ever seen in persons not twins existed between Ira and William personally for many years, but not now to so great an extent; and, to a great degree, mentally also. But socially there is a marked difference; for whereas Ira is full of life and vivacity, William is remarkable for the sober gentleness of his demeanor; the one is the incarnation of good feeling, life, and gladness, and the other of delicate sensitiveness, rapidity of perception, intuition, and calm dignity.

The elder brother was, during his childhood, quite remarkable for his retiring disposition; for so shy was he, that, when visitors and strangers came to his parents' house, he would quietly steal off, as if their presence was irksome to him, and alone, in some retired spot, would muse away the hours, returning to the house only when well assured that they were safely off.

Mr. Davenport, sen., related to the writer many incidents of the juvenile career of his sons, and, among others, stated, that, long before Ira could walk alone, he took to drawing, as if by a natural instinct, and even at that early period of his life, gave unmistakable evidences of the possession of

high natural talent in that peculiar line; for he would creep all over the floor until he found a stick suitable to his purpose, and then, full of glee, and crowing with joy, away he would scramble, till he found a sandy spot, or, failing in that, some place where dust had collected and settled, whereupon he would amuse himself for hours together, in drawing landscapes of a pattern peculiar to artists of that age, and figures of things, which, while distantly human, could truly be said to resemble all things generally, and nothing in particular.

Mrs. Davenport, whenever she wished for a quiet time, had nothing to do but hand Ira a bit of stick, or some chalk, and that young gentleman gave her no more trouble till eating time came round again; and the pictures, if such they could be called, were quite surprising, and by no means haphazard performances: on the contrary, they displayed considerable purpose and design, and gave bright promise of a future artist of eminence, which career would doubtless have been his, but that a Power above us all had decreed and ordained a different one, — and one, too, compared to which the brightest career ever run by any painter or artist of any kind pales and sinks into utter insignificance; for it was that of uplifting the veil which blinded the eyes of untold thousands, to the tremendous fact of human immortality; that is to say, provided that the manifestations about to be recorded, and which took place in the presence of himself and brother, be really what many claim them to be, absolute and undeniable demonstrations of the continued life and activity of man when the fever called “living” is over at last, as many of us believe.

As in riper years, so, also, in their infantile days, there was a strange and mutual sympathy between the brothers; for without speaking a single word, and, indeed, long before one of them could speak at all, they held mental intercourse together: and Ira, the eldest, quite frequently

interpreted to others what William himself was wholly unable to express. By a singular internal telegraphy, they read, sent, and received thoughts from each other.

Mr. Davenport had once kept a store ; but, having relinquished that profession, he still kept many of the implements of its prosecution stored away in various parts of his residence.

One day, the youngest boy went searching all over the house for something that he wanted, could not find, yet insisted upon having. The nearest that he could get to an expression of his notion was, to his father, "Davy, Davy!" which was Greek to everybody about the premises, until Ira came in ; and he instantly came *en rapport* with his brother's mind, and told the folks that the child wanted some small weights, which were stowed away in a dark closet hard by. The weights were sent for, and Ira's interpretation proved to be correct.

Mr. and Mrs. Davenport, as already observed, lived in the city of Buffalo, State of New York, a fine and flourishing place on the borders, or, rather, at the foot, of Lake Erie. They were there in 1853, 1854, and 1855. The writer is unaware of what the religious sentiments or convictions of Mrs. Davenport were ; but those of Mr. Davenport were decidedly liberal, though not to the extent of making him sanction what he regarded as the crudities and inanities of a class of persons then just in the zenith of their peculiar propagandism, and who, in their zealous anxiety to build up what they called "spiritualism," did not hesitate to attempt, at least, to break down all other faiths and creeds. These people staked their all upon the faith inculcated by invisible table-tippers, and regarded themselves as spiritualists merely because they believed in the possibility of intercommunication between a visible world here and an invisible one somewhere else, forgetful of the fact that a man's being born in a stable does not *necessarily* make him

a horse. The *ultra* and the *outré* isms of these people offended Mr. Davenport's sensibilities, while their unwise zeal disgusted him: hence it is no wonder that he laughed their pretensions to scorn, and derided their claim to communion with the world of invisible intelligences as preposterous and absurd; nor could he be persuaded to give the matter even five minutes' attention and investigation, because, in his opinion, the whole thing was so very puerile and stupid.

So things went on, Davenport still laughing, and the zealots still maintaining that they held indisputable intercourse with the invisible world.

But, lo! a sudden change took place.

Mr. Davenport had a friend of whom he thought a great deal, and in whose common sense and judgment he placed great reliance. On the morning of the thirteenth day of February, in the year 1855, this friend called on the Davenports, looking quite solemn, and evidently with a great pressure of some sort on his mind.

After a while, Mr. Davenport prevailed upon him to open the budget of his trouble, and he consented to do so. The following dialogue then ensued:—

“Davenport, I tell you that we are altogether mistaken about this rapping business being all humbug and delusion. I assure you it has a foundation in fact; for I have recently witnessed a phenomenon in that line, which not only precludes all idea of illusion and imposition, but clearly demonstrates not merely the fact of the existence of invisible intelligent agents, but the still more startling one, that those agents, whatever they may be, are in direct *rapport* with mortal men, take a positive interest in whatever concerns us, and can and do demonstrate their presence and power by not merely coming in contact with, and moving and handling, material objects, but by floating human bodies in the air, and causing persons not at all

given to the *cacoethes loquendi* to speak eloquently, but to make these selfsame simple ones, young girls and children, utter philosophical, scientific, and theological discourses of a character that would do great credit to the Sorbonne, or any other college in existence. These things I have seen, these things I have heard; and therefore fully believe."

To which Mr. Davenport responded, —

"Oh, pish! stuff, nonsense, humbug;" and was going off in a hurry, doubtless deeming his friend half demented, when he was recalled, and almost staggered from his position by what his friend testified to himself having witnessed with his own eyes, namely, to having seen a boy of five years floated over the heads of the company in a room, and carried by some unseen agent through the air in that room, in broad daylight.

Mr. Davenport stopped laughing, and on that very night broached the subject to his family at the tea-table; every member of which, except the girl, Elizabeth, made merry over his wild story, and at the impression it had evidently made upon his own mind.

At length, Elizabeth, the daughter, then ten years of age, spoke up, and put a quietus to the discussion, and, as the event proved, forever, by saying, "Well, what's the use of talking about it? If other people have these strange things in their houses, why can't we? I'm sure we are as good as anybody else; and, if these things can be seen by just sitting round a table, suppose we clear off the tea-things in a hurry, and try what we can do."

Was it the voice of inspiration that uttered those oracular sentences through the lips of that pretty little maid? Wait the event, and then decide; for, when the child spoke, her eyes glistened with strange, unearthly light, her lips quivered and trembled, and her cheeks became pale as death; and it appeared impossible to resist the thought that she spoke under some extraneous power or influence; all of

which greatly interested Mr. Davenport, who, with his wife, readily accepted the suggestion. And, accordingly, as the clock struck the hour of seven, the entire family of five persons found themselves seated at the table, with their hands resting lightly on its surface, patiently waiting for developments

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## CHAPTER II.

THE five who sat down at that table as utter skeptics rose from it — but not till the clock struck seven on the following morning — perfectly and thoroughly convinced of the existence of that which before they had doubted, and that an unseen, humanesque intelligence in reality hovered round them, and indicated its presence in a variety of ways.

The first indication of the action of any outside power consisted in the disturbed trembling and apparent bulging of the table, accompanied by a peculiar cracking and snapping, immediately beneath Mr. Davenport's hands, so singular and peculiar, that he did not hesitate charging those who sat at the table alongside him with producing it themselves for the sake of "fooling," and having a jolly lark at his expense; but the charge was repelled and denied indignantly by every person at the table; whereupon it occurred to him that the sounds heard were veritable rappings *à la* Rochester, and the Fishes and Foxes of that celebrated locality.

Acting on that suggestion, Mr. Davenport forthwith said over the alphabet, and soon found that the sounds conveyed intelligent telegraphic sentences; and, having asked the unseen force to move the table, that piece of furniture forthwith went up into the air several inches from the floor,

and played numerous fantastic tricks during the next three hours.

The party now proceeded to call the alphabet, the table tipping whenever the right letter was named; and in this way Mr. Davenport obtained what purported to be a communication from his sister, who had been dead about one year. Before her departure, she had held a long and solemn conversation with him in regard to her offspring, which conversation and its purport was wholly unknown to all save they twain; and yet this mysterious communication not merely referred to that conversation, but repeated portions of it, so unmistakably correct as to convince every one present, that, though she was dead, she yet was living.

On that selfsame eventful night, the very first of Ira and William's new development, the family received quite a number of post-earthly telegrams from dead friends and relatives; and from that night all three of the children rapidly became very powerful rapping and tipping subjects. Indeed, on the first trial, many of the thumps were sufficiently hard, loud, and strong to shake not only the furniture, and glassware on the shelves, but also the very house itself, from chimney-top to foundation-stone. Morning came at last; but so excited were they all, that not one of them even thought of endeavoring to obtain a little sleep. But they went about their usual avocations, it must be confessed, without a great deal of interest that day.

Each of the parties promised the most inviolable secrecy, because they had a wholesome terror of that mythical dame, Mrs. Grundy, at whom so many *fools* tremble to-day.

Mr. Davenport went abroad, however, and, having the luck to encounter a confirmed skeptical friend of his, must needs relate a portion of his last night's experience, which that friend promised faithfully not to mention to a *single* person whatever, and kept his word; for he told it to *married* people, and a score or two of them at that: the

consequence of which was, that, instead of only himself coming to investigate the matter, at least five hundred people flocked to the house, until not only was the house full inside, but, to quote Paddy's evidence, "It was chuck full outside" also. There was not standing-room even in the front yard; and the street was literally packed beside; for by eight o'clock, the hour appointed for the *séance* to begin, not less than two thousand people were around and about "the haunted house." Davenport stock began to rise from that hour; it is rising still.

On the second trial, the same things, with slight variations, occurred, as on the previous occasion.

Another day rolled by; and not only all Buffalo, but the entire region round about, was plunged in the wildest conceivable state of excitement. Davenport stock was a hundred per cent above the highest point it had ever reached before; and this retiring, unobtrusive family suddenly leaped into the most astonishing publicity, celebrity, and popularity; and many a man who had often said brusquely, "How do you do, Davenport?" now took off his hat, and said, "How are you, *Mister* Davenport?"

The third evening came: a goodly company, embracing editors, lawyers, doctors, bankers, brokers, and preachers of the gospel, were gathered in that humble home, a sort of Bethlehem of modern times. All great reforms appear to spring on humble soil; and the little affair, and the unknown persons engaged in it, in that little house in Buffalo, has not only spread far and wide, increased to colossal proportions, but the simple youths have probably been instrumental in converting more people to a belief in human immortality, than any ten men since the days of Herod's reign in Judæa; for we speak within bounds when we say their number is immense, countable only in thousands: and yet their mission is but half accomplished, their work but just begun.



On the third evening, in the midst of the physical manifestations, the company was startled by an unexpected and unknown occurrence. Up to that date, the alleged communion between embodied and invisible intelligences had been carried on through chair and table telegraphy: but on this evening young Ira's hands began to shiver, shake, dance, and slap about in a manner totally unprecedented; and his parents very naturally became alarmed, and quite excited about it, for of course they knew nothing about persons being made to write *sans* purpose or object, and *sans* volition also. Accordingly, it was determined, then and there, to put a stop to that hand-moving operation, to accomplish which, three stout men took hold of and tried to keep both hand and arm still. They couldn't do it, unless, indeed, they broke the child's bones; for it thumped and flew about like mad, in spite of all their efforts to keep it quiet.

Presently, Ira said, "I feel that I want to write; something urges me to write. I wish I had a slate and pencil, I'd see what it means."

His wish was soon gratified; and, as soon as paper and pencils were furnished, the violent motions calmed down to a quiet and waving movement of the hand, albeit the pencil flew over the sheet of paper much more rapidly than that of an expert penman, while the company looked on in wonder.

As fast as the directing power behind the veil had made the boy write a few sentences, it also made him tear them off in slips, and hand them to various persons in the company, until every one had received a slip; and every one of these slips contained a communication and test for each separate person, that were so striking, so true and convincing, and so far beyond either the boy's normal power, or his knowledge of their private affairs, that great commotion ensued, and many and many a tear was shed,—tears of joy that the dead were not dead, and that the gone-before were

really present, intangible, unseen, yet still active, powerful, kind, and loving. It was a pentecostal season.

On the fifth evening, still more singular events occurred, and still greater testimonies were adduced, going far toward an absolute demonstration that the invisible agency at work was really human, that is, of disembodied humanity; for no sooner were all the company seated, than, by means of the alphabet and table, it called for a pistol, powderless, but capped.

A pistol was immediately procured, capped, and placed in Ira's hand; the boy having, in the mean time, been completely mesmerized, or entranced, by the inscrutable power behind the scene.

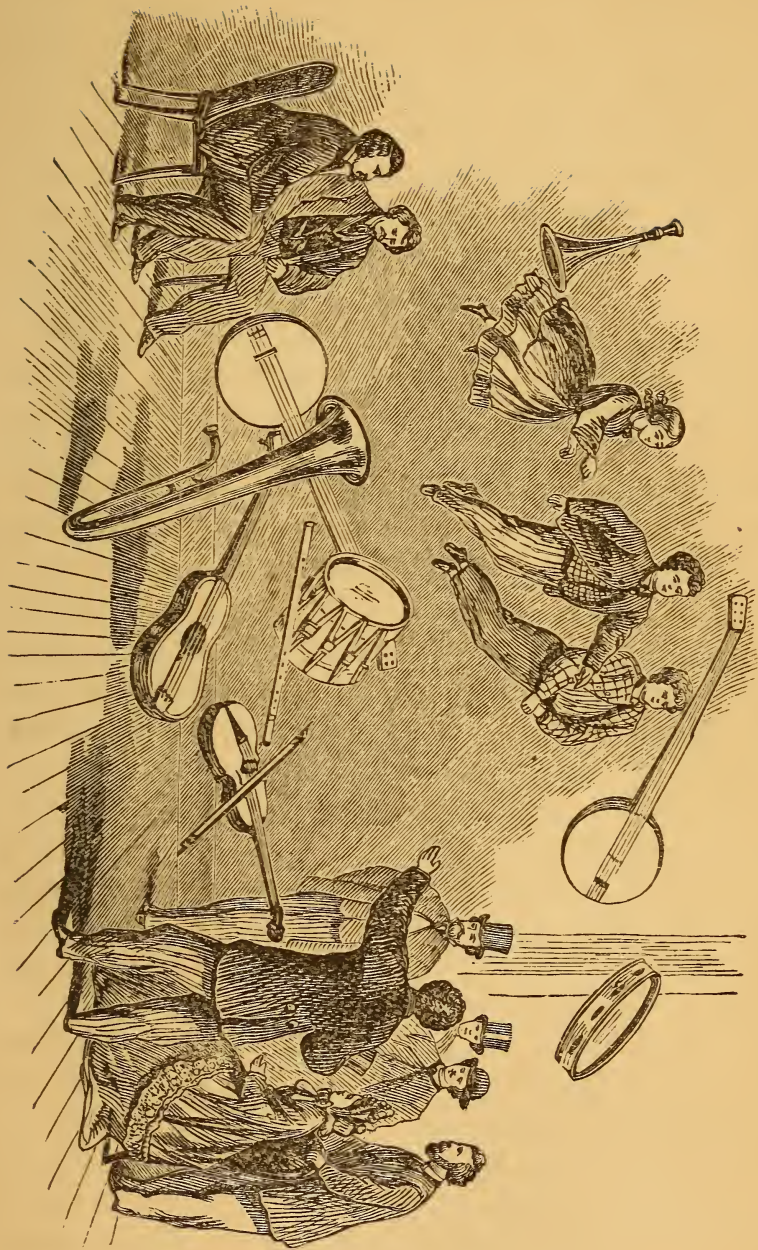
One corner of the room was vacant, and toward that point the boy advanced, and, presenting the pistol, exploded the cap, and, in the instantaneous flash that followed, the pistol changed hands, and the light disclosed the spectral figure of a man standing, pistol in hand, and intently gazing at the company, a smile wreathing its countenance, indicative of the tenderest love and solicitude for all assembled there.

The figure was seen for an instant only, and then it was gone, and the weapon fell to the floor; but, short as was that interview, it served the blessed purpose of convincing a score or two of obdurate skeptics that death was indeed swallowed up in victory. It was a baptismal scene, and one never, never to be forgotten.

The next night came, and punctual to the hour, which was seven, there sat down as many as the room could hold, while scores stood up for lack of seats.

The dogma of immortality was proving its value.

On this occasion, the performances were again varied. As on some previous occasions, the room was slightly darkened, the alleged reason of which requirement will be hereinafter stated; and scarcely was this requisition complied





with, when Ira was seized from his father's side by that power, and with as much ease as if his weight were no obstacle whatever. He was placed first upon the table, and then floated over the heads of all present, all around the room, coming in contact with the ceiling at the east end of the room, and, in the twinkling of an eye, with the western end. He floated nine feet clear of the floor; and every person in the room was offered the opportunity of feeling him while thus suspended in mid-air.

Suddenly, some one cried out, "William is flying also in the air!" and, sure enough, that boy had joined his brother in his excursion through the room, pillowed on hands unseen by any mortal being.

Again the cry was raised, "As sure as I live, Elizabeth has joined her brothers!"

It was true. The girl was flitting hither and thither, just as her brothers were.

On one of these occasions of levitation, the head of Ira came in such violent contact with the plaster and lath of the ceiling, as to break clear through it. This fact, as all yet related, is so well known in Buffalo, that probably forty persons in that city yet live who witnessed the event.

Again: on another occasion, not merely was Ira lifted, but he was carried ten feet in mid-air, through a room, hall, front yard, and tenderly landed in the street, over a fence, some seventy feet from the spot whence he was taken.

As time wore on, all three of the children appeared to intensify in their peculiar qualities.

On the seventh night, the company were entertained with a *scena* of great interest. Omitting the names given as those of the invisible actors, not wishing, at this early stage of our task, to moot the vexed question of identities, we will briefly sketch the occurrences that took place.

After the company were comfortably seated, the usual phenomena, such as rapping and tipping, went on for a

time, and then, suddenly ceasing, it was discovered that Ira had fallen, or by the unseen had been thrown, into a magnetic trance. Soon the child began to speak, not as from himself, or in his usual tone of voice or manner, but apparently as the forced proxy of some one else; for the style was that of a man of ripe years, and, so far as possible, the voice simulated one of high intellectual and commanding power. The first order given was to diminish the light in the chamber, which had no sooner been done, than Ira was lifted clear off the floor, and, in a short time, was placed standing upon the table; and he forthwith began a speech of a moral, philosophical, and religious character, far, very far, beyond his years, and equally superior to the capacities of the persons present, as they voluntarily admitted.

Some portions of the speech were not only eloquent but glowing, and its subjects gradually changed until it was altogether of a military character; and in it many technical terms and phrases were used, of which all present were ignorant, as well as of their definitions, and remained so till aided in their solution by the dictionary. Presently this ceased, and the child got down from the table, and advanced part way toward the door of a room that was kept constantly locked and closed, it being used as a sort of storeroom for the odds and ends that so constantly accumulate in a family. Before reaching more than half-way to this door, a very loud and very violent rap was heard upon its further side, as if a strong man had struck it in a rage. It appeared to be a signal between two of the unseen ones; for no sooner had the noise died away than Ira, in the heavy manly tone of voice formerly used, said, in a tone of command, "Come in!"

It has already been stated that the door was locked, and the key was on the hither side, so that, of course, it could not be opened from the outside; yet, nevertheless, no sooner had Ira spoken than the door flew open, as if of itself, to admit somebody; and to the sense of hearing, though not to that

of sight, that somebody entered through the door, and advanced (the sound of heavy footfalls being distinctly audible) to a position about five or six feet from the boy, who had assumed a dignified and military bearing. As this strange sound-maker advanced, the boy cried, "Halt!" saluted it, called it by a name forever famous in French history (itself claiming a still greater one), and then asked the stranger-phantom — if a disembodied being temporarily incarnate, and by processes unknown to us here, can really be spoken of as such — to be seated, just as if the weird presence possessed absolute corporality.

Now it so chanced that the chair that had formerly been occupied by the boy Ira had been removed to one corner of the room, to get it out of the way; and as soon as the words "Be seated" issued from the lips of the boy proxy, that chair instantly moved toward the audience, as if impelled by an invisible hand, or its own volition, supposing this latter to be possible. Then there came the sound as of some one being seated; and the child approached the apparently vacant chair, and began to go through what appeared to be an examination of the arms and accoutrements of the phantom-soldier, for there came the sounds as of a sword being taken from and returned into its scabbard, followed by the click of pistols.

This curious scene over, the boy proxy advised the chair-occupant to "take a position in the army;" whereupon the chair again moved, as if some one had just risen from it, and in so doing threw it carelessly aside. Another moment, and the same regular heavy footfalls were heard, as if moving toward the door, which instantly flew open, as before, and the phantom-man passed through; whereupon it again closed without the help of any embodied person's hand, but remained shut for a brief space of time only, for again there came a loud, imperative rap upon it, and the same scene, in all its singularities, was re-enacted, save that the name

applied to the invisible one was that of another illustrious personage of French history. The termination was, however, quite different from the former; for the boy proxy told this last personage to prepare for battle. Apparently he, or it, did so; for in an instant there came the sound as of a brisk infantry engagement, in which firing by sections, platoons, battalions, and divisions was so splendidly imitated by raps — which fell in a perfect storm upon the ear from all parts of the room — as to both astonish and alarm all present, for the scene was very strange indeed. But it did not stop even here; for intermingled with this mimic battle came booming sounds of light artillery, occasionally relieved by sullen discharges of heavy guns, like as if some desperate enemy were thundering at the gates of a beleaguered city: and not only were such noises made, but it seemed as if a storm of lead and iron hail smote in terrible wrath against the walls, followed by crashing sounds, as though some mighty citadel was toppling earthward beneath the vindictive blows of the fearful gorgon, War.

A very remarkable circumstance connected with these curious incidents was this: not a person in that room but distinctly heard blows upon the wall, floor, ceiling, tables, chairs, just as if those objects had been struck with a hammer, or real bullets and cannon-balls; and they just as naturally expected to find them bearing the marks of such an assault, as one would expect to see those of a real siege upon the walls of a town after a heavy bombardment: and yet, strange to say, not a single spot could be found indicative of contact with physical substance; the entire scene having been effected by a power, and with instrumentalities and agents, at that time totally unknown to those present.

What the writer has stated in the foregoing pages may, and probably will, challenge the belief of many who shall hereafter read them; for they are of such a character as to almost surpass credence: and yet, strange as it may appear,



nothing is more absolutely certain than that the facts occurred literally, as stated. Nothing has been exaggerated, but, if any thing, the affair has been undertoned in description.

Scores of persons yet live (in 1869) who were present on that and other occasions similar to it in results, and are ready to testify to the truthfulness of the record.

The extraordinary nature of the occurrences that were constantly taking place in the presence of the juvenile members of the Davenport family now began not merely to excite the jealousy and spleen of many persons and coteries engaged in pursuing the same studies and investigations, many of whom had pet theories of their own to maintain, which theories were totally invalidated and demolished by the Davenport phenomena, but the inexorable hatred of men was aroused, — men of all classes ; and the most zealous and vindictive, vituperative and subtle of them all, were those who occupied positions as teachers of that very identical doctrine which these singular occurrences were believed to absolutely demonstrate. Of course, the dogma of human immortality is here alluded to. Why, above all others, the religious teachers should have lent themselves to bitter and relentless opposition, may appear at first rather strange ; but such will not be the case when the whole matter is looked at from a philosophical standpoint, viewed from a position elevated above the sphere of prejudice, educational and hereditary, popular and almost universal ; all of which prejudices were supposed to be directly assaulted and ruthlessly attacked by the new order of things evidently being inaugurated by these new and startling events.

To say nothing concerning the transitional character of the present age and its influences, the disruptive elements of society, politics, and systems of faith, the cause of much of the opposition must be looked for in the unwise zeal of fanatics, who, imagining that because some disembodied

and frequently apocryphal philosopher disavowed doctrines current among men here on certain religious and theological points whereon men have differed for ages, concluded that all ancient revelations, and existing systems based upon them, must necessarily be false; totally ignoring the great truth that of necessity all men are fallible, and God the only true. Hence these unwise men, and women, too, because they believed in spiritual existence and communion, considered themselves not only perfectly justified, but specially commissioned to indiscriminately attack and endeavor to demolish every system and every thing that did not square and tally with what, to their heated, hence unsound fancies, were absolute and unconditioned truths.

Church, politics, art, science, theology, geology, astronomy, religion, tenets, creeds, philosophy, love, marriage, and divorce, all and each became the objects and subjects of fierce and vindictive attacks from the fevered lips of these people; and no surer passport to their society could be had than a regular attack on Moses, Jesus, and the Bible; for which reason, and believing the whole to be the legitimate outgrowth of a belief in the modern wonder, the conservative portion of society, led by their teachers, declared formal war upon the spiritualists, to say nothing about the tremendous personal interests as a second motive of resistance, attack, and defence. As a consequence, those parties in whose presence the new phenomena occurred became the especial objects of dislike, not unfrequently intensifying into malignant and vindictive hatred toward them.

The even tenor of the Davenport family's way was doomed to be disturbed; and threats of arrest, imprisonment, suits at law, rapidly degenerating into darker ones of personal violence and clandestine murder, began to be the regular sauce to their daily meals. The females shuddered, the boys blustered, at the news; but the father kept cool, and resolved to fight it through honorably, bravely, truly, if fight he must.

An experience similar to theirs has been that of scores of others, and will be, probably, until men learn more, and the world grows wiser, in the good time coming.

Let us now return to the narrative of events. About two weeks elapsed from the date of the mimic battle and bombardment, written of a few pages back, during the *séances* of which the usual manifestations continued to attract the attention, and challenge the intellects, of the people, among whom were to be found many who bore names high in popular estimation, — men of science, professors from colleges and universities, lawyers, physicians, judges, philosophers, and eminent editors, and men of letters from all parts of the continent. And not a few crossed the briny waters from Europe's old strand, in order to see with their own eyes and hear with their own ears the evangel of immortality as reputed to be demonstrated by the living dead in the presence of the three young Davenports; for by this time their fame had spread from one end of this continent to the other, and, leaping across stormy seas, had arrested the attention of the profoundest scholars of England, France, and Germany. And these three humble children of a humble family were already filling a niche in proud Fame's temple that many a man would willingly have struggled a lifetime to have reached; and yet they were totally unconscious of their greatness, or their vast importance not only in their country's and the world's history, but in that of human thought itself.

"I would rather," said a great man, "be the father of that family than to wear a nation's diadem, or wield a nation's sceptre; for kings and princes die and are forgotten, but Ira and William Davenport will be remembered gratefully when scores of generations shall have passed away, and virile empires have crumbled into dust."

One day, at the expiration of the two weeks specified above, the Davenport family were sitting at the breakfast-

table, discussing their morning meal and the last night's operations, when it suddenly became apparent that they were not alone in the room; for the knives, forks, spoons, and dishes appeared to have been endowed with life, vitality, and volition. Soon those objects began a fantastic cotillon up and down, over and across the table, as if they were celebrating some happy event in exuberant jubilation.

Evidently the spirit of jollity was contagious; for soon the table itself began to exhibit a decided *penchant* for waltzing, albeit its motions savored somewhat strongly of a night spent in a whiskey-mill. Now it went up, up, up, first balancing itself on one leg, as if making the usual experiment of over-night sprees, — that of walking a crack; then it went on two; finally it grew tired of that practice, and, disdainingly physical contact with *terra firma*, it floated clear from the floor, balancing now this way, then that, until it seemed almost, if not quite, a miracle that the dishes did not roll or slide off, and crash into ten thousand pieces on the floor. In fact, Ira and William became both alarmed and indignant at this display; for they were particularly hungry, the breakfast was particularly good that morning; and, as things looked just then, it appeared physically certain that said breakfast would very speedily come to grief, especially if that staggering, reeling, tipsy table didn't quickly terminate its antics, and put a stop to its "monkey-shines."

The good breakfast was not destroyed; but the interest in it very speedily abated by reason of an incident that now took place.

William, whose heart was in his mouth as he watched the table, suddenly exclaimed in a half-terrified tone of voice, as he chanced to look up, "The biggest man I ever saw is here! Oh, *what* a large man! I'm afraid of him; and yet he don't look as if he wanted to hurt me or anybody else."

Of course, this phantom was invisible to any one but the boy William, who thus gave proof that to his already remarkable qualifications had been recently added that of psycho-vision, or the first degree of clairvoyance, — a power which he subsequently possessed to an extent quite remarkable, as was also the case with Ira his brother. "William," said Mr. Davenport, "William, my son, keep still: perhaps this 'big man' may have something to say."

Accordingly, William kept still; and in a very short time his countenance and manner underwent that peculiar change observable in all persons of a somnambulant or mediumistic tendency: and in a few minutes he spoke, not as the proxy of the phantom-man, but of his own volition, and said, —

"This stranger is so tall that he can scarcely stand erect in this room; and he is equally large in all other respects. He is indeed a giant." It must be remarked here, that, if William's description was correct, the stranger stood over eight and a half feet high.

"Will he tell who he is, where he came from, and what he wants with you or either of us?" asked the father. To which the boy replied immediately, "He says he is not of this earth; that his name is William E. Richards; and that for certain reasons, and specific ends to be accomplished by his aid, he has been delegated to come here and take charge of, and for a time direct and control, this circle and its agents, by a convention of persons similar to himself in the world invisible to us. He desires me to say to you for him, 'At two o'clock this afternoon, I want you to convene your circle. When it shall have met, I desire the undivided attention of all who may be present, but especially that of the family. Materials for writing I shall also want; for you are to receive some very important instructions, on the strict observance of which by yourselves a very great deal depends, or will depend.'"

It is deemed proper at this point to explain how this message was received, at least the ostensible how; and that was, simply by impressions on the part of the principal, or mind-reading on the part of the proxy; and, at this stage of William's development, the probability is, that both these processes were made available.

The hour of two at length came, and the parties took seats at a table; it being, of course, broad daylight, and the curtains drawn to the window-sides.

The elder Davenport looked upon that as by far the most important *séance* yet held under his auspices: and, while his children looked upon it as a good bit of fun, to him it was a source of deep anxiety; for that was the first intimation he had received that himself and children had a mission to the world and public duties to perform; the first of which he could hardly comprehend, and the second of which he shrunk from utterly and entirely. And it was with deep anxiety that he sat down with his children at one table, after having placed writing-materials on another, at quite a distance off, yet still in plain and open sight of all there present.

Perhaps two minutes elapsed after sitting down, before any thing whatever took place; and the beating of their own hearts, and their own suppressed breathing, were all the sounds they heard: but, at the end of that time, every person in the room clearly and distinctly saw the lead-pencil rise as if of itself, and then glide like lightning over sheet after sheet of paper, which paper itself seemed so endowed with not only life, but intelligence, as to adapt itself to the demands of the pencil; for it looked as if the writing then being done on that table was the combined result of the motions of the pencil and the sheet; for both moved rapidly during the entire process.

The whole of what was then and there so mysteriously written, it is not herein intended to state or give; but a part

of it was to this effect: The Davenports were therein directed by the power calling itself "Richards," to go to a furniture-store, and then and there to select and purchase a certain sized round table, the aforesaid table to be thenceforth dedicated to the use and service of "Richards" and his invisible coadjutors, the final intention being to make said table a dumb, but still eloquent and powerful preacher and proclaimer of the soul's deathlessness.

"Go," said the communication, "and I will go along, and will assist you in making a proper choice and selection. When you come to one suitable, I will rap my approval." Accordingly, the circle was immediately suspended, and off the Davenports started to a furniture-store, a large one, kept by a man named Taunton Baldwin; and, true to the mystic promise, when they came to a table that seemed to answer the requirements of the "director," there came a rap, so loud, hearty, and imperative, that it quite surprised Mr. Baldwin, who wonderingly asked what it meant. Mr. Davenport explained; Mr. Baldwin became interested, and subsequently investigated the entire subject to his complete satisfaction. The table was purchased, paid for, and sent to begin its career of usefulness in the room where for a long time it served the bread of life to the hungry souls that gathered round it, as many of its fellows served literal food to others in other rooms in that city and elsewhere.

Before it was sent, however, "Richards" said, in his method of conveying information, that it was his intention to give the world something new in the shape of phenomena, with and by that table.

A curious thing connected with this "Richards" is, that he, or it, disclaimed having originated, or even to have, while embodied in gross flesh and blood, dwelt, upon this earth. It is the opinion of the writer hereof that this disclaimer was not true, but that it pleased his fancy to assign himself an origin different from that of other men, either to

gratify a whim, a stroke of vanity, or to attract people to the investigation of the general subject of man, by that novel, and, certainly, very effective method. Be this as it may, however, certain it is, that there *really was* a great difference between the power called "Richards" and any other that manifested for the Davenports, under whatsoever other name.

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### CHAPTER III.

"WHEN night came, we found," said Ira Davenport, sen., to the historiographer of his children, "that the news of the occurrence in Baldwin's store had spread to such an extent, that a very large company of men, all of a different class from those who usually frequented our circles, — for they were all commercial men, — had gathered in the apartment devoted to our *séances*, or 'sittings,' as they were usually called. And by far the majority of them were present at such a place, and for such a purpose, for the first time in their lives; hence were very avid and hungry for marvels and wonders: indeed, so keen set were their appetites in that regard, that nothing but full-fledged miracles seemed proper aliment on that occasion. They were soon gratified to their entire satisfaction."

During the first part of the evening, the usual order and sequence of phenomena occurred, such as has herein been already described, and which consisted of rapping, table-turning, pistol-firing, exhibiting a spectral form by means of the flash, and the other features usual, such as showing lights, floating the musical instruments in the air, and making strange, unearthly noises. But soon there came a variation not anticipated by any person present.



The room was darkened; the two boys sat between four persons, who held on to them, so as to prevent trickery, if any was intended, and to put a decided veto upon one of them aiding his brother, in case assistance should be attempted; for the events that took place in their presence were so utterly strange, incomprehensible, and so totally different from all known chemical and other material laws, that, even to this day, it is difficult to understand how disembodied persons can effect them, and still more so to comprehend how the boys could accomplish the thousand strange things that unquestionably were accomplished, and still are (in 1869) in their presence: hence the easiest solution of the matter was found in the word "trick," and everybody was on the *qui vive* to expose it; but to this day, no one has been able to do so, notwithstanding heavy rewards (one of many thousand dollars) have been offered to whoever shall demonstrate, either that the Davenports do perform all the wonders, or that disembodied persons *do not* perform them.

From all of which it follows, first, that these young brothers are "smarter" than any one of the very smart ten or fifteen millions of people who have witnessed the phenomena occurring in their presence; "smarter" than the whole of those millions united and combined; else that they are what they claim to be, the instruments for the display of a power inherent in every human being, but only developed and exercised subsequent to physical death.

Here, then, is a dilemma, the one horn of which makes the inquirer one of a vast flock of fools, the other requiring an unqualified assent to the spiritual theory.

There is no halfway ground. It is either *Hic Rhoda*, *Hic Salta*, or an absolute and unconditioned acquiescence in the dogma of immortality, as demonstrated by the dead, yet living, through the Davenport Brothers, and others of like qualifications and natural attainments.

The people present on the occasion now being described, all considered themselves decidedly "smart," and quite competent to expose the "humbug," as not a few of them chose to stigmatize the performances of the power in that room of marvels. Therefore, when they found that four of them had secured the two boys, four more Mr. and Mrs. Davenport, and two others Elizabeth, in such a manner that not one of them could stir and not be detected, they laughed, "Ha, ha! It is well!"

But, presently, Ira was lifted bodily in the air, so high that they could no longer retain their hold upon his garments as he floated in the air. They said, but did not laugh, "Ho, ho! it is curious!" Then both boys were placed in the same way, and by the same power, on the table; and the power requested a skeptic, named Plympton, to seize the feet of the boys, and not to let go of them. How readily he accepted this proposal can easily be imagined. He approached, took hold of Ira's feet, and Ira went up to the ceiling. Mr. Plympton couldn't see how it was done; but before he had time to canvass cause and effect, up went the other boy, high flying in mid-air. Mr. Plympton couldn't understand *that*, either. Mr. Plympton's mind was in a very muddled condition, yet he, like an honest and brave man, declared that at last he had a theory perfectly explanatory of the whole matter, and the manner of the Davenport levitation; which idea the Davenports received with levity, — no pun intended.

Mr. Plympton's notion was, that one boy helped the other, and he proposed to solve his doubts there and then, by causing Ira to get down from the table. Ira did so, with the utmost alacrity, and was held by two men in the circle; but, *mirabile dictu!* no sooner had *his feet* touched the floor, than up into the air went William's body, and with such force, that his head went plump through the lath and plaster of the ceiling, which was a plumper for Mr.

Plympton, and a genuine Roland for his Oliver; then a scene of excitement ensued that utterly baffles description. Everybody heard the crash which was occasioned by the effort of the power to lift the boy out of Plympton's grasp, the latter clinging to him with all his strength. In the struggle for the mastery between "Richards" and his antagonist, the latter got the worst of it, and the boy's head went up between two beams; had it struck either of which, instant death must have ensued, and this history have remained forever unwritten.

Everybody supposed the boy was killed; and, when the light was turned on, the people gathered round the child, and rejoiced that nothing worse than a bad "scare" for all concerned had resulted. Thus ended the "commercial" circle; and a strange one it was.

Not long after the incidents just related, — the writer not being certain that it did not take place on the same night, but thinks Mr. Davenport told him that it did, — those present were told to "keep still, and darken the room." On one side of the room was a pantry, the shelves of which contained the family treasures in the shape of glassware and delft, or, as the signs have it, "china, glass, and earthen ware." The circle was directed by "Richards" to sit around two tables, placed together. It did so; whereupon the door of the pantry was flung open by an unseen power not cased in flesh and blood, and every one of those dishes, together with glassware, and every thing else in it, was taken out and piled upon those two tables. Then the boys were taken and placed on top of the dishes, and all the vacant chairs and seats in the room piled on top of *them*, and all that without breaking or fracturing a single article; and this, be it remembered, took place in a room dark as Erebus.

The lights were struck, and by dint of great care they got the chairs and boys down, after which the lights were again put out, and the same power returned the crockery

and glassware to the pantry, putting the pieces in their accustomed places; and that, too, without the slightest mishap or accident, albeit Mrs. Davenport trembled for her highly-treasured and very fractible household gods.

After this display of power, the Davenports were directed to hold a circle at two, P.M., on the morrow, by "Richards;" whereupon the party separated for the night, the commercial men unanimously voting the Davenports to be the most singular specimens of "goods" they had ever before encountered, — an opinion confirmed by at least ten million besides themselves.

The morrow came; and two o'clock found a party gathered in the room, which had been so curtained as to exclude the sunshine, and render the interior a pleasant twilight, but not so dark that objects in all parts of it were not plainly discernible.

In a short time, the manifestations began by various indications of the presence of the mysterious power that guided and produced them.

Presently the boys were lifted and carried from the table to the windows, and held up in front of one of them, clear of the floor. "We distinctly saw," says an eye-witness of the thrilling scene, "two gigantic hands, attached to about three-fifths of a monster arm; and those hands grasped the ankles of the two boys, like an iron vice, and they thus held the lads, heels up and head downward, before the window, now raising, now lowering them, till their heads bade fair to make acquaintance with the carpet on the floor, they all the while yelling like so many young elves, not from any pain they were undergoing, but from the novel and quite undignified position occupied for the time being."

This exhibition was repeated several times: nor was it the first instance; for on a previous occasion, already mentioned, the power claiming a high military French name had carried Ira out of that same room, through the air, and landed him

over the fence in front of the house, in the street, his parents running after him, and almost tempted the while to cry "Stop thief!" only its absurdity was too apparent.

The human mind is strangely constituted. It delights in enigmas and contradictions. Such is its nature. Now one would suppose that a person witnessing such things as here-before recorded would not fail of acquitting these children not only of imposture, but of the slightest attempt in that direction. Such, however, was not the case; and this, too, not only among skeptics, but those who were nominally themselves spiritualists; from amidst which class, it seems, as a general rule, all mediums find their most bitterly vindictive accusers, and most obdurate foes, especially if the media refuse to go in leading-strings, or follow the beck and call of the KNOW-IT-ALLS.

Among the fantastic tortures which the Greek mythologists invented for the condemned in Hades, two were ingenious in hopelessness. The daughters of Danaus were eternally set to fill tubs with holes in the bottom, while another offender had the equally despairing labor assigned him of twisting ropes of sand.

Great tasks these, or either of them, but, great as they were, mere child's play compared to that self-assigned one of accounting for the Davenport mysteries on the ground of imposture, electrical machines, or on any other than the true hypothesis, namely, that viewless but real personages, resembling man in all respects save that of having immensely more power, and being far more fertile in resources, produced them. If there are such resemblant beings, who yet are not human, the *onus probandi* rests with the caviller, not with the Davenports; while the notion that two children have outwitted the world, and successfully hoodwinked millions, for years together, under all sorts of test conditions, is too bitterly humiliating to be entertained at all.

And yet there were persons who witnessed such displays

as are above recorded, who gravely maintained that "these boys, being highly electro-biologico-magnético-odical, could and did suspend themselves by the heels," in mid-air, in broad daylight, before not less than fifty pair of eyes, every one of which were sharp set to detect imposture and machinery.

If the boys could and did suspend themselves, then they may have solved the problem of a man in a tub lifting both tub and himself in it by the handles; but the proposition is so exceedingly puerile, that no sane person could entertain it for a moment.

When questioned as to the means employed to effect their feats of levitation, the powers performing it have invariably replied, that "exuding or emanating from all persons is a semi-electrical aura, which aura floats above and around them. In the case of some peculiarly-constituted individuals, as the Davenportes, this aura is susceptible of condensation by means inexplicable to those who have not made electro-dynamics especial and long-continued study. Now, in order to effect levitation, either to float bodies of greater or less specific gravity, or to create temporary hands, heads, faces, or bodies, two things are requisite; first, one party of us must attend strictly to not only keeping this aura circumscribed within certain specific limits, but to prevent its admixture with that which emanates from the spectators or auditors who may chance to be present. While one party of us are doing this about and around the media, another party on the floor are engaged in using aura, either in floating bodies about the room, or condensing its particles upon themselves, whereupon they become temporarily visible, in whole or in part. Occasionally, there is sufficient of this aura to enable us to temporarily condense it upon our lungs and heads, and then, of course, having a physical body for the time being, we can speak as you speak, and do that you all do, but only for a short time; for too many experiments

of this kind, without sufficient time being allowed for recuperation, is certain to exhaust the medium: and sometimes to such an extent is this carried, that wise friends of the media specially protect them, and will not permit the experiment to be made; whereupon such persons are said to have lost the power, or lost their mediumship, which, however, will return in proper time."

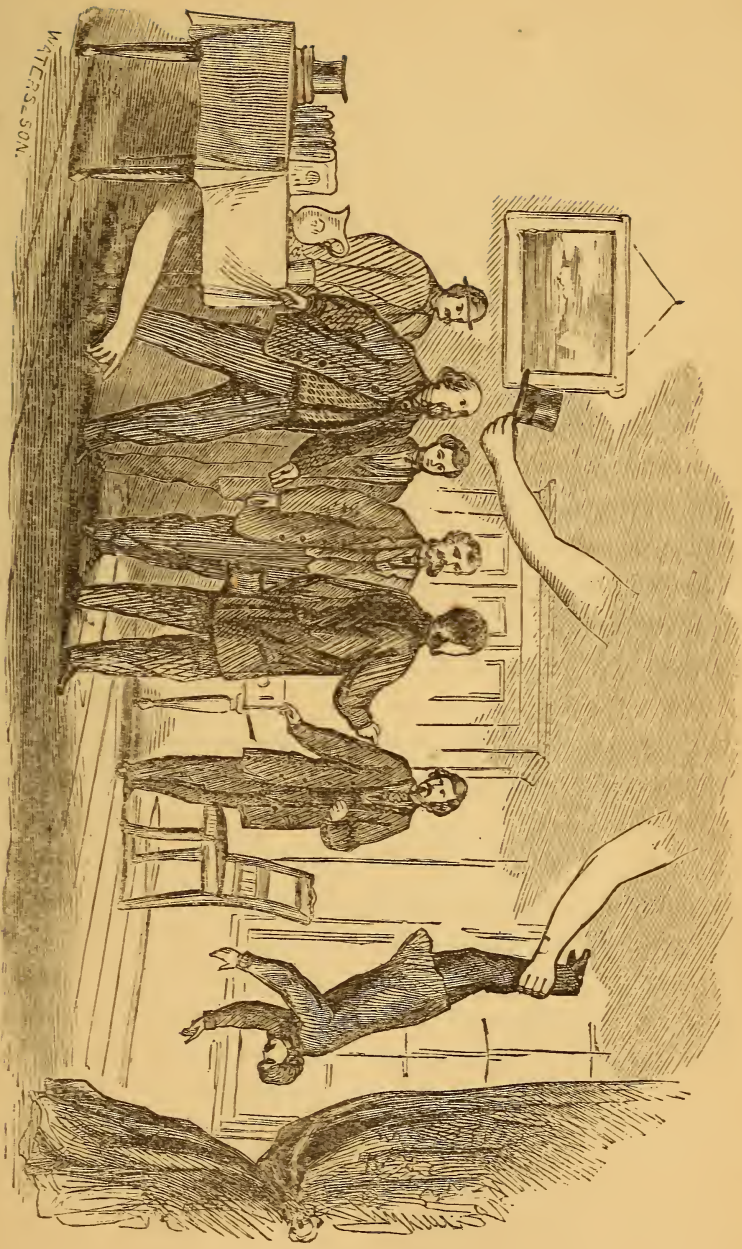
Such, briefly, is the rationale of the matter, according to authorities that claim to know all about it. It seems to the writer to be the true one, and as such is here adventured in good faith, as the probable solution of the mystery. Certain it is that heavy bodies *are* lifted in the air by means invisible and unknown to us. Effects must have causes, and the means here sketched appear not only adequate to the production of the effects under consideration, but also present themselves in the garb of reasonableness.

On the occasion when the gigantic arm lifted Ira, and held him suspended by the heels in the air before the window, subsequently, and then simultaneously, served his brother and himself in the same way, the son of Dr. Blanchard, then of Buffalo, since of Chicago, Ill., a very eminent member of the medical fraternity, and Elizabeth, or Libby, as she was and still is familiarly called, were placed in seats, side by side, and all present saw an immense arm, apparently growing out of space, approach glidingly along the surface, but elevated a little above the floor, till it reached Blanchard's chair, whereupon the hand attached to it went round him, and seized the lower back rung of Libby's chair, lifted it clear from the floor, balanced it playfully, yet critically, for the child, and then raised it to the ceiling, before the astonished eyes of the numerous company present, all of whom distinctly saw the whole operation. The chair and child remained levitated for nearly a minute, and were then carefully deposited on the floor, in the exact position from whence they had been taken.

Now, supposing that the feat had been performed by some one in collusion with the Davenports, three things are to be considered: first, the performer did not belong to the circle, for all the Davenports were under the direct surveillance of skeptical persons, intent upon detecting fraud; second, the only doors leading from the room were locked on the inside, were in plain sight of the entire company all the while, and therefore the colluder must have gained an entry by some other channel; but, if he did so, it was not by way of the windows or chimney, while there was no possible place of concealment in the room; third, the colluder must have had the power of rendering all parts of his body invisible, save his head and about four-fifths of his fore-arm. Again: such a feat of strength was utterly beyond the physical power, not only of the slender boys and men in the room, but of nine hundred and ninety-nine men in every thousand; for to lift that chair and child at arm's-length would require a muscular grip, on account of the leverage, equal to a pressure of three hundred and seventy-eight pounds to every inch of the rung within the grasp; while to float it, as it was floated, called for an expenditure of muscular force equal to the lifting of a ton and a half dead weight, for the chair was constantly held out on a level with the forefinger of the hand and the extended arm. Of course, the writer does not pretend to say that the power that lifted the chair really exerted that tremendous amount of force; for, in all human probability, the hand seen lifted part of its weight, while other hands, unseen, assisted from above: but he does say that the display was quite surprising.

At this point, it will be quite apropos to relate a circumstance of precisely an opposite, yet, if possible, still more convincing character, in which there was displayed an evidence of the power of the mysterious being to see material things without the aid, of course, of material eyes such as we are blessed with on this beautiful earth of God and man.







The incident referred to was this: the father of the young Davenports was and is a skeptic by nature; for he possesses one of those stubbornly-moulded intellects, whose habitude is to reject ninety-nine points confirmatory of a theory, if the hundredth chance to fail; and, notwithstanding his immense experience of and acquaintance with the phenomena usually ascribed to disembodied agencies, — which, in his case, probably surpasses that of any one man now living, or that ever lived, — the skeptical mood *would* come on him; and he constantly resorted to all sorts of expedients in order to test a matter still more thoroughly, that he had exhausted himself in endeavoring to explode and account for on any other ground than the true one. At length, about the time wherein the last-described occurrence took place, a happy thought struck him fairly, and a plan was presented to his mind, whereby not only would he catch the boys tripping, if trip they did, but test the seeing and knowing power of the invisibles at one and the same time.

And now, a happy man was Davenport. He felt like the Greek who ran from the bath, crying, “*Eureka, eureka!*” — “I have it, I have it!”

Mr. Ira Davenport patted himself on the back that day, for he felt considerably proud, “if not more so,” to think that not only was he the honored and favored father of the most wonderful trinity of children ever yet born on earth in any one age, but now he was parent to a thought whose suggestions, when practically carried out, would forever set at rest the question of “legerdemain *versus* super-mortal power and efficiency.” And so he put on a very grave look, took a seemingly careless stroll about town, dropping in at a stationer’s, “accidentally on purpose,” and emerging therefrom in possession of pens, ink, and sundry sheets of paper, all carefully stowed away in the capacious depths of his coat-pockets. As he slowly walked along the streets, he smiled,

and said mentally, "Oh, ho! Messrs. Ira, William, and Libby Davenport, I've stolen a march on you *this* time, if you do play tricks — *sure*;" and in complacent mood he sauntered on, until he had determined where to go for the purpose of perfecting his scheme in absolute secrecy. At length he found a spot exactly adapted to it, and then and there, unkened by mortal eye, wrote a letter of inquiries, sealed it carefully, addressed it to "Richards," the big disembodied, and then carefully hid said letter away, and hied him to the circle.

For the first half-hour, things went on as usual; but at the end of that time, one of the children, but which, cannot now be said, was impelled to call for writing-materials, which were supplied, and the child, under a resistless impulse, wrote a long communication, which proved to be a complete answer to the letter of Davenport, *item for item, and point after point*.

Mr. Davenport's skepticism had received a very heavy blow; for he knew that no earthly being was aware of his intention, its object, or the plan, time, and manner of its execution; and it was clear that a mind not his own, or that of any of his earthly contemporaries, had not only perceived his state of doubt, but had watched every consecutive step that he had taken, with a view to that doubt's solution. Only one thing militated against and prevented his complete conversion, and that was the notion that the response had been framed by the respondent (the child) from the original letter, as it existed in both the elder Davenport's mind and memory, as well as in the manuscript. He resolved to test *that* point also, and to this end wrote other letters to the same address, requiring answers only obtainable in fields of science, and of which himself was totally ignorant. It was of no use: the replies still came as before, and tests were given, of such a character as to convince him that not only were the answers given independent of the

minds of the boys, but by an intelligence far, very far, superior to any one he knew, no matter what his acquirements.

That point being settled to Davenport's complete satisfaction, he found himself a great deal happier than he had ever been before, and it was not long before himself and others remarked that the manifestations became more marked, striking, and positive in their character; indeed, quite extraordinary, for some of them were so utterly startling, that were there not scores of witnesses still living, cognizant of the facts, the historian would scarce dare record them and expect to be believed.

As a specimen of what is alluded to, the following is presented, every incident of which is capable of being substantiated by the sworn oaths of a score of as respectable men and women as grace and adorn any community in Christendom, and many of whom still live in the vicinity of the place where the facts occurred.

One day, at a private *séance* held at the house of Mr. Davenport, and to which he had invited a dozen of his friends, or more, there came some new and rather singular manifestations, from a power, or intelligence, strange to all those present, one of whom demanded its name and business there, and received, in the ordinary manner of obtaining such responses, an answer, to the effect that it was the freed or disembodied soul of a man, who, when living in the flesh, had been known as "George Brown;" that he had recently been a Canadian farmer, and had, but a little while previously, been murdered by the notorious and infamous brotherhood of crime, known far and wide as the "Townsend gang," a collection of diseased men, — some call them villains, which is, perhaps, a just definition, as times go.

Here was something decidedly new and sensational; and, as a consequence, everybody was on the tiptoe of excitement and curiosity to hear the victim's story; which story,

if it should happen to prove correct and true, would go far to establish two mooted points: first, as to the identity of an invisible intelligence with a man formerly known here (establish *that* point, and the dogma of immortality, *per se*, was thenceforward impregnably fixed; and the notion that the intelligences were *not* men, but a species of aerial vampires, having their home in the SPACES, and who, out upon a universal lark or frolic, had taken the earth in their route, and were now amusing themselves at our expense, would, in such a case, be exploded and demolished); and, in the second place, if it could be proved that "George Brown," invisible, was the same "George Brown" whose career had been changed by Townsend's gang, then would certainly follow a complete refutation of the assertion, that if a dead man's soul went to heaven he would not want to return, and if he went to hell the Devil wouldn't let him. Nor was this all; for, if *his* identity could be established, it would lead to a far more extended intercommunion between the dwellers on either side of time, as a result of which good must come; for if Brown still loved those he had left behind him, and manifested such an interest as to return and guard them, then a great revolution was inaugurated, for such a fact would of course prove that the dead could see us, though themselves unseen. Very few men have the hardihood to commit crime in the known presence of witnesses; for, however low or debased a man may be, still there is never an entire loss of shame or self-respect: hence it was generally believed and practically understood, that however a man's deeds, intentions, and thoughts may be hidden and concealed beneath an external mask or cloak, still nothing was more certain than that if his entire career, at every step and stage of its enormity, abnormalness, guilt, and foulness, was witnessed by countless eyes, deprecated by countless hearts and heads, and stored away in countless memories, the man would, nay, *must*, become a

better citizen of Cosmopolis, — the town of the world, — from the operation of Nature's first and highest law, that of self-preservation; for no man, living or dead, is callous to the opinion of his neighbors or mankind generally. When the knowledge of this fact becomes universal, that the "cloud of witnesses" are really here now, and at this and every moment of man's life surround him, evil doing becomes, not merely in its final results, but presently and now, neither more nor less than a losing game.

The thought here attempted to be expressed, it appears to the writer, is one of vast importance; for it discloses an additional motive toward a good life and pure, while it furnishes another repellant force against vice and evil thinking.

These issues were to be tried that night; and on the result of the *séance* with "George Brown" depended more than one great question: hence his presence was fraught with interest the most intense and valuable.

In a short time, Ira Davenport became, as it is called, entranced, ceased speaking for and of himself, and became for the time being the vocal proxy of the new client, "George Brown." The boy was laid at full length upon the table, around which the expectant ones were sitting, and, while thus situated, began to speak. He said that he, "George Brown," had really and truly been slain. He told who perpetrated the dreadful deed, where it was done, and why, even giving the date, and names of persons known to belong to the "Townsend gang." He stated that he had been at the time of the murder a resident of Waterloo, in Canada West; that one morning he had left his home, with exactly fifty-two dollars in his pocket, for the purpose of buying a yoke of cattle therewith, he being a small farmer in that neighborhood. He stated that he had been unable to effect a purchase, and, in consequence, started for home; that, in order to reach home, it was necessary for him to

pass through one of those large, gloomy, and tangled huckleberry-swamps, so common in North America; that doubtless some one had been made aware that he had money with him; that, in consequence, an ambush had been contrived, into which he unsuspectingly fell; that he was robbed and murdered in that swamp; that his body still lay buried therein. "George Brown" amplified this statement at length, omitting nothing essential to the unity of the strange story from first to last, and never prevaricating or doubling at any stage of it, notwithstanding the rapid fire of cross-questioning which he, through Ira, was compelled to undergo, by several legal gentlemen who happened to be present on the occasion.

The narrator then told his age, place of birth, his wife's name, the locality of her home, the number of her children, their names and ages; besides giving a very graphic description of her and their state of mind, and their various surmises as to what had become of or happened to him.

Said he, "I'll convince you all if you will but have confidence in and believe me. No man, be he in or out of a physical body, does any thing without a motive. Such is the case with myself. The motive that has induced me to come hither is the strongest that ever urged a human being to action: it is love, — love for the dear wife whose heart is daily breaking, because to her, but recently, I was, but am not, — love for the dear children robbed of their father's care by the assassin's dagger; and to reveal this terrible story of wrong; to cheer those mourning ones, and wipe their tears away, by convincing them, that, though unseen, I still exist, and exist in happiness, only marred by the spectacle of their sadness. To do this is why I am here, and why I invoke your aid. I can take you and these mediums to her, and to the spot where in silence reposes all of earth that pertained to the man 'George Brown.' By your aid and theirs, I can convict my slayers, and bring



them to condign punishment, by which I mean repentance and reformation, *not* the *lex talionis*."

One would have thought that an appeal so stirring as was that, would have sunk so deeply into any just man's heart as to have fired him to the investigation. It did, and it did not. Mr. Davenport next day went to a town called Waterloo, in Canada, just opposite Black Rock, with a friend; and they very soon satisfied themselves that "George Brown" was an impostor, the murder a *canard*, and the whole story a fiction from beginning to end, except a single point; and that point was, that a gang of scoundrels, led by a youth of Black Rock, named Townsend, did really have an existence, while all the rest was mere "leather and prunella."

Disheartened, Davenport and his friend determined to say as little as possible about their being "sold," and started on their return to Buffalo, when, as luck — shall I say? — would have it, who should they encounter but the sheriff of the county, whom they immediately made up to, and began to question as to whether he knew, or had ever heard, of one George Brown, that had lived in Waterloo.

"George Brown? why, of course I did, well. He *did* live in Waterloo, but don't live there now; for it is rumored that he was killed not a great while ago by some of the Townsend gang: not *this* Waterloo, but another Waterloo, sixty miles from here. I know Brown's wife and family as well as I know my sisters." And, in fact, the sheriff gave an account precisely correspondent to that of the invisible one's in every particular, — names, dates, persons, places — *all*.

Mr. Davenport and his friend Salisbury looked serious.

They returned to Buffalo, and on that night a goodly company collected in the rooms to hear their report; but, long before they had time to even commence it, young Ira, who had been at school and play all that day, was thrown

into the trance condition by what purported to be "George Brown" himself, who, as usual, spoke through the boy as proxy, in the first person singular.

He declared that he had been to Canada, along with Davenport and Salisbury; that he had observed all their proceedings; and, to prove it, repeated, almost verbatim, the conversations they had held with the sheriff and other parties at Waterloo; at least, so the writer understood.

These facts were deeply interesting to those present; indeed, so much so, that a purse of money was subscribed on the spot for the purpose of defraying the Davenports' expenses to and from the scene of the alleged homicide. But the senior Davenport's faith was altogether too weak. He declined to go, and mainly on the ground, "What will Mrs. Grundy say?"

Subsequently, he saw and conversed with a man who lived in *the* Waterloo; a brewer, who knew all the facts, as related by the sheriff, besides some local items.

When it was too late, when other engagements pressed upon him so that it was impossible for him to attend to the case of "George Brown," regret, with no few tinges of remorse, beset him for shirking his responsibility, his bounden duty. He was severely punished for not following up this clew, so strangely given, and hunting the murderers to their lair, if for no other end than that of adding one additional item of proof to this vexed question of identities; for, if "George Brown" of the trumpet and the tables should verily have been identified with George Brown of Waterloo, a great many more of us would have stronger grounds for believing that we are not deceived *always* when conversing with what purports to be *our* dear ones gone before us to the bourne whence millions now return.

It certainly was incumbent upon him to have communicated with Brown's widow, and to have eased her mind by

setting the facts before her. It will be many a day before Davenport forgets his grievous sin of omission.

What must have been the feelings of the dead man, who thus saw his counsel rejected, and himself mocked, as it were, by the very man who ought to have acted differently! Let any of us imagine ourselves in his place, and perhaps we shall know.

It soon became evident that "George Brown" was aware that Davenport did not intend to keep faith with him; and he determined to resort to other means to accomplish his object, if within the range of possibility: and so he announced that he intended to take Ira to the scene of his murder, in spite of Davenport, or any one else.

Davenport laughed at the idea, considering that *he* was master of *that* situation, and no mistake.

It was not long after the occurrence just cited (said Mr. Davenport to the writer of this history), when the whole subject had been forgotten, under the pressure of events quite as startling, but different in character, that the boy Ira came from school one afternoon, and while preparing for his usual task (that of distributing the evening papers around the city), remarked that he felt very "queer." This complaint went unheeded; for, as a general thing, boys are apt to feel queer whenever there is an immediate prospect of much work and little play.

He started, delivered a number of papers, and then, as he walked along, lost his consciousness entirely. When he revived, he found himself about a mile and a half down the banks of the Niagara River, standing in the snow. How he got there he could not tell, for there were no tracks of either his own or other feet to show that he had walked or been led there; possibly they had been drifted in. But then how came he there, anyhow? People in the body supposed he went by the ordinary natural means of running or walking: certainly he could not have flown with wings, they not then

or yet having been developed. One hypothesis was, that he had been "spirited" away. Indeed, what purported to be disembodied men and women, in various circles, maintained the last-named hypothesis, — that he had been carried off bodily, and placed where found. They asseverated this through various instrumentalities; declared that Ira had really been carried through the air, just as was Philip in the olden time, — a feat that would, indeed, be little else than a miracle. Ira had been levitated scores of times in presence of hundreds of witnesses, and, if it was possible to float him three feet, why not three thousand yards? The principles were the same, so were the agencies; why not, then, the effects correspond? why?

In these self-same circles, the invisible ones are said to have declared, that not only had they carried Ira from where he lost himself, but that, between that moment and the time of his awakening in the snow, they had taken him to Canada, over Niagara River, as an experiment and test, and measure of their powers; and then returned him, senseless still, to where he woke with cold.

When challenged by scientists to explain the *modus operandi* of that feat, the power asserted that from the boy issued naturally a peculiar aura, or emanation, capable of condensation to an extent to enable it, or them, to float Ira's body in it; and while the boy was thus elevated, somewhat in the way that a balloon is, he could be moved to any point with the greatest ease, especially if the route lay near or over the water; the greater amount of electricity issuing thence than from the land rendering the transit far more practicable.

There can be little if any doubt but that electricity, in some way and in some form, really does constitute a positive element in all these manifestations of hyper-human power; but in or by what particular manner or adaptation it comes into play, is a question quite beyond the historian's power to

answer: one thing, however, is quite patent, namely, that, when electrometers indicate a preponderance of electricity in the atmosphere, the invisibles act with greater power and freedom on material objects. Nor is this all: no man of a *purely* electrical (blonde) nature ever was a great poet, sculptor, artist, novelist, orator, or "speaking medium." Such persons excel as historians, mechanics, lawyers, financiers, brokers, bankers, and in all professions that require cool, clear, intellectual processes; and it is notorious that the dark-eyed, dark-haired, brunettesque, or magnetic speakers and mediums are not only the most forcible, energetic, original, and eloquent, but that their best efforts are invariably made when the air is clear, dry, and cold, hence most electrical: on the contrary, when the weather is warm and sultry, no audience need look for any thing at all equal to their expectations based on the speaker's fame; while, when the weather is magnetic, and even hot, your blue or gray-eyed, light-skinned, fair-haired orator surpasses him or herself. One is an electrode, the other a magnetode.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

YOUNG Ira Davenport's unusually prolonged stay on his paper-distributing errand was a source of considerable uneasiness on the part of his friends and parents; and their anxiety increased as the evening wore on, and he did not return. Boys, generally, are in the habit of taking their own time to do any thing they are commissioned on, especially if other boys propose a game of "tag," "base ball," "hopscotch," or "skating;" but Ira was not given to such pranks: on the contrary, he usually devoted his spare time

to drawing, in which art he became quite an expert. Moreover, the threats of many ill-wishers were still fresh in his parents' minds, and they began to grow excessively alarmed; but, not knowing whither to go in search of the truant, it was resolved to wait a while, and then go after him.

Accordingly, the family sat down to the evening meal, which was taken in silence, accompanied with many an ominous toss of the head. Finally, they finished, having nearly as much food on the board as when they sat down. The table was pushed off to one side, with the absent boy's supper prepared upon it. The family then drew near the stove, and began to talk about the possibilities of Ira's whereabouts, in which conversation the table joined, not in vocal speech, but by lifting up one leg, and then another, and again all four; anon skipping about in a manner indicating a decided state of tipsiness, just as if it wanted to say, "It's all right, d'ye see? Don't get frightened till you're hurt!" And in the midst of this scene in rushed Ira, looking, for all the world, as if he had been sent for in a hurry, and found it difficult to come. The boy was, evidently, half-frightened out of his wits.

There was joy in the Davenport family that evening.

How strange a thing is human nature! We never half value a thing or person, until they are either lost to us forever, by death, estrangement, or disaster, or we feel that we are threatened with the loss; then, but not till then, do we realize the enormous strength of the fibrils love and friendship have wound about our hearts; and this is true, even though the object is known to be unworthy. Mothers are notoriously most fond of such of their children as are blemished mentally or physically by nature. If we but slightly love an object or an individual, that love will quickly double its volume, and intensify itself, if but some one makes war upon it. Many a man will curse his horse, country, or wife, and keep doing it, year in and year out,

quite as a matter of course; but, just let some one else do the same thing in his presence, and he's ready for a fight on the instant. When the writer of these pages had crossed the desert, and reached Jerusalem, he had not seen an American in ten months; and when, in honor of his arrival in the city of Jesus, Mr. Olcott, the American consul, commanded his K'vass to throw the stars and stripes to the breeze, and their glorious folds waved upon the wind from the summit of Zion's holy mount, there ran through his soul a stream of fiery love for that banner, and the land it represented, that all earth's waters could never quench. Like all others, he had underrated America. Now, after ninety thousand miles of travel, he had learned to love her; for she is the best land God's sun ever shone upon, — *if one's skin is fair, — as times go!*

This principle instantly asserted itself in the parents of the Davenports, for they were constantly being vilified and abused by people, and the children became dearer to their parents' hearts; and every danger that threatened added an iron link to the chain of their love.

Not a little of the opposition against the young Davenports came from self-styled mediums, who were either jealous and envious of their rising fame, or chagrined because they were not suffered to control and manage their affairs. These were mainly people who kept *séanceries*, where mediums were manufactured, by magnetic process, at so much *per caput*; and, could they but get the boys to sit in their circles, they might drive a roaring trade. Failing in that, they turned the cold shoulder, and hot, envenomed tongue, against them. Constantly mouthing about human charity, their practice was that of human ghouls; and none so happy as they, when some poor devil of a medium made a false step, and fell into the straw, or disaster; wretched ones, who ought to have been nursed back into health (for all sin is but disease), instead of which, these charity praters

damned them, so far as their slimy tongues could do so. Of course, such are spiritualists only in name, — the pariahs and camp-followers of the progressive army of Reform. They belonged, and still belong, to the class called “out-and-outers;” that is, those whose highest idea of spiritualism consists in worshipping tipping-tables, and listening to frothy obscurities from the lips of persons called mediums, made so by being manipulated on the head and body by professed medium manufacturers, or “developing media,” improperly, and often falsely, so called. Even in the present day (1869), comparatively little is known, even by the best informed, concerning the undercurrent of laws and principles underlying, subtending, and governing the varied phenomena of spiritualism, scientifically considered; and, in the main, far more is known of its ethereal and mental than of its material and substantial side. In some sense, I can but regret this fact, and wish that the outer, and merely chemico-mechanical sides of the wonder were more fully comprehended; for then, it seems to me, the moral, religious, intellectual, and æsthetic portion would rest on a surer and firmer foundation than can be the case where the inner only is the subject of attention and study. But can we comprehend the physics of spirit, before we fairly know the spirit of physics, is a question. Perhaps not. Still, I regret the fact. It seems to me, that more attention should be paid to the external side of the modern miracle, if for no other reason than to reduce the physics of spiritualism from chaos to system and order: so that, with such media as the Davenports, conditions might be made whereunder tens of thousands might see the marvels at once, and vast hosts be convinced of immortality, beyond doubt or cavil, without the necessity of crude experimenting, as now, and in the past. I am tired of all uncertainties, and yearn for the dawn of the positive era of spiritualism; tired of the crude hypotheses of ignorant charlatans, and equally so of the cur-



rent baseless theological metaphysics. Surely, no grander field for science and research ever lay before the human mind than this. If there is, I know not where to find it. In the early days, we had any amount of crude guesswork and speculation; but, surely, the time has come for something far better and more substantial. I do not believe that true media can be made to order, as some "professors" claim; but I do believe there are laws, which, if understood and obeyed, would enable myriads of us, now deprived of that pleasure, to open up a perfectly satisfactory intercourse between ourselves and the dearly loved ones who have preceded us but a little while across the darksome river.

Let us return from this necessary digression to the Davenport family.

When Ira came in, as soon as he could speak, his story was listened to, and, if the truth must be told, scarcely believed; not that his auditors thought that he falsified, for if he was remarkable for one moral trait more than another, at that early age, when lying is universal among boys, it was his chivalric regard for truth, no matter what the consequence attendant on its telling might be to himself: but the people thought him slightly aberrated in mind, and remained under that impression until the events of the night induced a change of opinion.

In the course of the *séance* that took place an hour later, the powers unmistakably demonstrated their presence and efficiency in a variety of very convincing ways; and, when "George Brown" began his exploitations, the elder Davenport took occasion to indulge in a little personal quarrel with him, and berated that transparent personage quite severely for having played such a fantastic trick with his son Ira; whereat "Mr. George Brown" advised Mr. Davenport to forbear declaiming until extricated from earth's umbrageous adornments, — in plain English, to not halloo till out of the woods, — that he meant the boy no harm,

was merely experimenting; told how and why he had taken the boy away; and declared his ability to carry him from Buffalo to where his own mangled body lay, in Waterloo, Canada, in the space of one hour (a distance of sixty miles as the crow flies), or at the perilous rate of a mile a minute. There were, and still are, scores of persons who believed such a feat quite possible; but the proposition was so alarming to the Davenports, that they protested against the attempt, and so earnestly, that at length they obtained a promise that it should not at that time be made. I think their conclusion a wise one.

About a week after that night, a party of young people came all the way from New York expressly to visit the Davenport circles; and one evening, while they were there, the power that manifested came and announced some very startling news, to the effect that a portion of the gang, led by the boy bandit, Townsend of Black Rock, had heard of what had taken place in the "George Brown" affair, and of Davenport and Salisbury's adventures in Canada while investigating it. The gang had become alarmed; had held a council in one of the back slums of Buffalo, where such human parasites congregate, and engender crime to startle the world; and had, in their infamous convention, unanimously resolved that the principal agents of the exposure should be put out of the way, with as much expedition as possible, else there was no safety for them.

Poor fools! they imagined that dead men tell no tales; and that, too, strange as it may appear, right squarely in face of the fact that a dead man, "George Brown," *had* already so effectually told his tale as to fill their recreant souls with a terror second only to that inspired by a broadside view of the scaffold with its yard or two of well-soaped rope hanging invitingly down toward their bared necks. They forgot or ignored all this, and fondly imagined that they had but to give Ira and William a *coup de grace* to

secure themselves perfect immunity from arrest and punishment.

Of course, this information occasioned any thing but the most pleasant and delicious sensations to either the company or the Davenports. Nevertheless, they were not badly frightened; for it was not the first time they had been threatened with all sorts of revenge and vengeance, too, for fancied wrongs, growing out of certain revelations that could *only* have been made by persons familiar with the circumstances revealed, which persons had long since crossed the mystic ferry of death.

When questioned on the subject, the communicating intelligences stated, that, at about the hour of one on that very night, the vengeance-seekers would make their attempt on the lives of William, Ira, and Elizabeth. The plan resolved upon to effect their object was a very natural and simple one, and therefore much more likely to succeed than would any more elaborate method of attack.

One of the party was to openly approach the house when all was still, while a score or two others took special care to conceal themselves close by. The first one was to go boldly up, and rap at the door. The door, it was anticipated, would be speedily opened, it being no unusual thing for the family to be aroused late at night by travellers passing through the city on the railways, who could not spare the time to remain over, and whose curiosity to at least *see* the Davenports, if not witness the displays of superhuman power made in their presence, could not be otherwise appeased; somewhat on the principle of that other American traveller, — from “Arkansaw,” perhaps, — who procured a lantern and guide, and inspected the falls of Niagara; which having accomplished, he resumed his seat in the cars, at the end of the fifteen minutes (short measurement) allowed on Yankee railroads for “refreshment” purposes at midnight, or any other hour.

As soon as the door was opened, a well-directed blow between the eyes with a lump of lead, just a pound in weight, was to do the business for Mr. Davenport, or whoever opened the portal. Simultaneously with that proceeding, the gang were to rush in, make directly for the chambers occupied by the three children, apply cold steel and hard clubs till life was extinct, set fire to the house, withdraw, and the matter would be settled forever, — as *they* thought. Such was the precious scheme revealed by an intelligent power invisible to human eyes.

Of course it created much excitement; and the only cool and collected person in the room was Mr. Davenport. The New-York party insisted upon staying to guard the house, and test the truthfulness of "George Brown:" but Davenport pooh-poohed the notion; declared that he didn't half believe the story; and, if it was all true, that he was quite competent to all the defence required. As for the two boys, boylike, they were in ecstasies at the idea of a fight, and straightway held a council of war between themselves, in which they decided upon a plan of defence and attack admirably calculated to preserve themselves from harm, and leave at least half a dozen *vendetteros* on the field. They were well pleased; and William slapped Ira on the back, and said, "BULLY for you!" and Ira swelled with martial ardor, and said to William, "Bully for YOU!" Davenport said nothing, but kept up a style of thinking that boded no good to Mr. Townsend and his fellow-patriots.

Finally, convinced that their longer stay would be offensive, the New-Yorkers left the house at a quarter of twelve, but with many serious misgivings as to the possible consequences of so doing.

At ten minutes past twelve, the heavy tramp of men was heard in the door-yard; and instantly Mr. Davenport began to *look* pistol-balls, and evidently resolved to use them, too, if things came to the worst. The courage of the lads

underwent a slight fall. There came a heavy knock at the door, and Davenport went to it instantly: the boys were not *particularly* swift in following him up as a *corps de reserve*. Indeed, it is not quite certain that they did not feel a little, just a *little*, shaky about the knees just then. The writer judges them from himself at their age, fourteen years.

Open went the door, back sprang Davenport; for he had resolved to return an *impelled* for a slung shot: but there was no occasion. The comers proved to be five friends of the family, headed by Dr. Joseph Blanchard, who immediately asked Davenport if he knew what was up that night?

“What do you mean? What are you driving at?”

“Why, I mean that there’s murder in the wind! that’s what I mean! There’s a plan hatched to cut all your throats about that Waterloo affair.”

“How do *you* know?”

“How do *we* know? Why, ever since eight o’clock there’s been curious goings-on at half a dozen distinct circles in town, not one of which is less than a mile and a half from here; and, in them all, an intelligence calling itself “George Brown” has revealed a plot to murder you all to-night, and urged us to come and help avert the thing, and give the Townsends just what such scoundrels ought to have, — cold lead for cold steel, if they make the attempt.”

This was a remarkable circumstance. Blanchard had full faith in “George Brown;” Davenport, scarce any at all.

The mother and daughter immediately went home with the good doctor; and Davenport, his two sons (whose courage was again at white-heat), and two of Davenport’s brothers-in-law, resolved to make a watch-night of it, at least till the small hours of the coming day, and give the would-be assassins a warm reception.

Accordingly, the lights were put out, stations taken; and

they waited quietly till half-past one, at which time there came a thundering attack upon the door by a brick hurled with immense force and venom against it. The brick and its marks were found next morning.

Voices in low consultation were now heard, the result of which was, that the attack was not renewed. It was clear that the villains had been alarmed by the click of pistols in the room, immediately after the blow upon the door; and the baffled wretches were forced to retire defeated, but not punished, as they ought to have been, for thus seeking the lives of three children whose only crime consisted in their being the instruments whereby the truth of human immortality could be effectively preached in such a manner as to bridge the stolid senses of the race, and carry to every man's heart and mind a conviction of that man's deathlessness, in a manner and with a power never before surpassed on earth, and never, never to be forgotten.

Morning came at last; and the broken fence and shrubbery, the numerous foot-tracks in the soft mud, especially under the bedroom windows, where an attempt had been made to cut out a pane of glass, evidently in the intent of undoing the fastening, demonstrated not only that dead men *can* and *do* tell tales, but with such precision as to circumvent the keenest scoundrel that ever hatched robbery and murder in his heart.

[It is often asked, Why do not the spirits always expose crime, and bring the criminals to justice? I answer, Because jailing and hanging a man is *very seldom* justice; and spirits know, if we don't, that crime is the result of bad organizations, for which the criminals are *never* responsible. In my world-wide clairvoyant practice, I have steadily refused to become a detective, because I once knew a splendid man, who was an incorrigible thief, made so because the mother who bore him wanted, longed for, what she *could not* obtain, when pregnant with that son. And so are all pros-

titutes made, and all other morbid people. This knowledge led me to write and publish five several editions, each enlarged, of my "Love, and its Hidden History," and another, "The Curtain Raised."]—P. B. R.

No other attempt of a similar nature was made for some time. The gang was foiled for the present; but they were not defeated. Changing their tactics, some time after, they came very close upon finishing the earthly career of the Davenport boys, in a way that shall now be related.

Two or three weeks elapsed after the double adventure of the river incident and the midnight alarm, when an occurrence took place, of a character so base and vindictive as to excite the astonishment of even bad, foul-minded men. The circumstance was as follows:—

After Ira's adventure down the banks of the Niagara, his parents considered it quite unsafe to permit him to carry his papers unaccompanied; and therefore they deputed his brother William to attend and assist him in that pleasant and somewhat profitable duty. Accordingly, they travelled as a team, and still do; but the most powerful one that earth ever held before them.

Since the affair of the proposed assassination, the boys felt insecure when abroad. A sense of impending danger continually beset them, to obviate which, their father determined to give them the security involved in the possession of an old pistol furbished up. It was one of those old-fashioned, short, and stubby affairs, better calculated to inspire terror than to do execution: in fact, it was a regular demagogue of a pistol, and forcibly reminded one of an election orator, for it was nearly all mouth, and carried a ball about an ounce in weight,—not less, certainly; perhaps a trifle more. This formidable weapon was duly charged; and Ira carried it, sharing that supreme felicity with William once in a while, and but a little while at a time.

One day, the brothers were away longer than customary

with them; for they had some new and distant patrons to supply with the evening journals before nightfall.

In doing this, they had to pass a considerable way — say a mile or so — down Niagara Street, and were chatting along, as boys are wont, when they observed that they were slowly followed by four men, ascertaining that fact by turning down other streets two or three times.

Three of those men looked like born desperadoes, and as if they were intent upon either capturing the two boys or of doing them an injury, as soon as an opportunity presented itself of accomplishing it with safety to themselves. They were clad in Canadian costume, that is to say, in a style that partook of the French, English, and American, — a sort of compromise between all those fashions. The fourth — who was undoubtedly Townsend himself — was clothed in garments of American pattern. He was a young man, and, from his movements, appeared to be the principal person of the four; and so persistently did they follow and head off the now thoroughly frightened youths, that it was clear they meant to effect their object, whatever it may have been, cost in trouble or danger what it might.

At length, William persuaded Ira to make a run for it; and off they started as fast as their little legs would carry them, and soon had the satisfaction of seeing that they were no longer pursued; whereupon, they congratulated each other, but still kept running. The block on which they now found themselves was a long one, and led directly from the river toward a street that would afford a short cut homeward. Directly at the head of that street stood a barn, on the intersection of two roads; but what was the terror and consternation of the children, to find, when they reached it, that all four of the men were standing within twenty yards of them, and a considerable distance from any inhabited house. Ira drew his pistol, and simultaneously they both dashed at full speed down the side street up



which the four scoundrels had come. But they had not run five yards, before, in quick succession, several bullets whistled by them; and Ira, in his extremity of terror, wheeled, and fired his pistol in return, and still kept dashing down the road.

The pursuit was over. One of the men gave a yell of rage and agony, clapped both hands to his head, and fell headlong to the ground, whence his comrades speedily picked him up, and, returning to the road up which the boys had run, bore him off as fast as they possibly could.

The night was now rapidly coming down. The pistol-sounds had reached people's ears; a crowd of men soon gathered near the barn, but a large splotch of blood upon the ground was all of the affair that they could discover; and, as a trail of blood led down the street, away went the crowd, pell-mell, toward the ferry at Black Rock, while Ira and William, aided by what appeared to be some hyper-natural power, were rushing for home at break-neck speed. They arrived, breathless, but not without marks of the conflict; for a small bullet had pierced William's slouch hat, and another had passed through two parts of Ira's coat, where it had flapped in the wind as he ran. Evidently, the men carried better weapons than the boys did; for, whereas the ball for their pistol vied with those moulded for the old-time muskets, the holes in their apparel were made with bullets forty to the pound.

When the people reached Black-Rock Ferry, the boat had gone; and when it returned, the ferryman reported that he had rowed four men over the river, one of whom was bleeding badly from a wound, so said his fellows, occasioned by a very bad fall, which had gashed the man's forehead to a dangerous degree.

Of course, this adventure created a great stir, and roused the indignation of everybody, even that of the professed opponents of Davenport and his remarkably gifted children;

for while they were willing and anxious to have a stop put to their "sorcery," as they chose to call it, still, when it came to the point of murder, as against spiritual circles, why, the circles had it by an overwhelming majority.

Mr. Davenport, from that day, put a final veto on all paper-carrying, and all the more readily from the fact that everybody, without exception, when aware of the circumstances of the case, uniformly protested against permitting the boys to daily run the hazard of their lives. It was difficult, however, to wean the lads from what to them was a pursuit both pleasant and profitable. But at length they became reconciled, and thenceforth the paper-business was entirely dropped.

That the lives of the children were endangered became a certainty; for not only did the neighbors and friends of the family deem it advisable to have the boys sent away, but even the invisible and beneficent powers that attended on their presence declared that the scene of their activities ought to be changed, and changed at once; "for," said they, as said their friend Luke Rand, in other days, "through these mortals a great principle is to be tested, and results of no common moment determined in the event." To have them cut off just as they began to put forth their powers, to have the most splendid career achievable by embodied men cut short by a pistol-ball or the assassin's knife, was an idea not to be tolerated a moment by any one, whether in or out of mortal form, whose mind was capable of even glimpsing the magnificent results of their existence, should their lives be prolonged even to half the allotted three-score years and ten.

Said the noble-hearted, misunderstood, persecuted Luke Rand, in the dedication to a little *brochure* which he put forth in behalf of what to him was eternal truth, in reference to these selfsame Davenport brothers, — truths more valuable to him than "presidencies," and which, he doubted not,

should "bear his humble name, in some form of record, adown the centuries, fresh as shall be the rains, or morning or evening stars, when the titles of earth-born greatness shall be lost in the 'vortex of revolutions;'" and to any man with mental power enough to comprehend events, and forecast results, yet hidden from the common herd, it was, it must have been, plain and clear, that "these boys were of too great value to society, civilization, the world itself, to be suffered to have their lives imperilled; for that they were capable of doing that society, that civilization, this world, services so eminent as to hand down their names and record not only to the centuries, but to all time, so long as this soul-bearing world exists," was and is still a proposition so self-evident as to be apparent to all reasonable and reasoning men; for which reason, "Go, go!" was continually dinned in the ears of Mr. Davenport. But as in the "George Brown" and Waterloo tragedy affair, so now, he was unable or unwilling to see things in that light, and consequently set himself firmly upon not going one single step until it pleased him so to do of his own free will, without the least outside pressure.

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## CHAPTER V.

ABOUT this time there went to Buffalo Mr. S. B. Brittain, at that time one of the writers for a paper called "The Spiritual Telegraph." His object in going there was expressly to see and examine for himself the alleged phenomena attending the Davenport family. Mr. Brittain was reputed to be a clear-sighted man and a lover of truth, not at all fanatical on the subject of spiritualism, an ex-minister of the Christian gospel, and a man not likely to uphold

imposture if he knew it. In the early days of the modern wonder, the writer of these pages often met Mr. Brittain, and regarded him as a man among hundreds, if not thousands; for he knew him as a fine orator; clear, lucid, and straight-forward reasoner; and one who, if once heard pouring out what to him was God's own truth, was not easily to be forgotten: hence the weight of his testimony is valuable as to the genuineness of the Davenport wonders, if they are really spiritual; while, if they are not so, one of the sharpest men on this continent was most successfully hoodwinked, imposed upon, and deceived by a couple of untrained, uneducated children. To reason on the probabilities here involved would indeed be absurd; wherefore, let us pass onward.

Now, by reason of his position as chief editor of the then first spiritualistic journal on the globe, Mr. Brittain's facilities for witnessing the very cream of all the mysterious phenomena accredited to spiritual beings was, as a matter of course, the very best that could possibly be had or desired.

He had long been familiar with the leading media who had theretofore made an appearance in the land, and had tested their claims by the most rigid methods. His experience of mountebankery in the persons and actions of the herd of catchpenny professional exposers of spiritualism had rendered him peculiarly sharp-scented for any thing in the imposture line. He intended to lecture in Buffalo on the sabbath, and, while waiting, took care to cultivate the elder Davenport's acquaintance; and the latter arranged a *séance* especially for his benefit. Accordingly, when the time came, bright and early went the keen-witted editor from Gotham, to see what was to be seen on the shores

Of Erie, rolling rapidly.

The company was not too numerous for comfort, and it was as select a body of ladies and gentlemen as could be

gathered in any city of equal size on the continent; that is, on the authority of Ira Davenport, sen., who related the facts to the writer hereof.

He had not long to wait ere he was gratified to his heart's content; and, from the astonishment portrayed upon his countenance, one would have inferred that to have been his first initiation, and that he was a mere neophyte, instead of an old, experienced veteran in that sort of thing.

One of the first and most forcible things that occurred on that evening, and which surprised him, was, that the manifesting power spoke through the boys in a strain evincing deep solicitude for them. Again and again did the invisibles urge Davenport to remove his family to another scene; for, unless he did, evil would befall them all, and evil, too, of a nature and malignity so intense as to almost surpass belief; and especially so, when one came to consider the offence that provoked such deadly hostility, or set a score of men to seek reprisals in homicide.

But it all fell like vapor on Ira Davenport, sen.

During the evening, a great many curious exhibitions of a power above the human were made, and of such a character as to throw utterly in the shade all that the experienced man from New York had ever before beheld.

Among other things that took place on that night was a circumstance quite surprising even to the *habitués* of Buffalo and attendants at Davenport's *séances*.

A number of ambrotype portraits were placed in the hands of Mr. Brittain, which pictures were known to have been half a mile away from that house when the circle began, and no one had entered since that time; nor had the owner thereof brought them, but was certain that they had been in their accustomed places when leaving the house for the Davenport room.

In addition to this truly singular proceeding, little, soft, spectral children, demi-phosphorescent in outline, flitted hith-

er and yonder about the chamber; now touching this one with their tiny spectral palms and fingers, now patting that and the other one tenderly on the face and head, diffusing a joy and assurance of immortality in the hearts of all present, altogether inexpressible in human language. And these figures were those of children not exceeding two years old to judge from sense alone; and, be it known, no child was either in the room or in the house, in a mortal body, which fact forever settles the question that the visitants were of other worlds than this of ours.

That the occurrence was no device of the young Davenports was clear from the fact, that, during the time that the little ones were gliding about, all three of the media were thrumming upon the instruments *while being floated* in the air, over the heads of all present, and from side to side, and from end to end, of the room, occasionally chuckling with glee at the strange and novel sensations attendant upon the process; something like the peculiar feeling one has when jumping from a beam in a barn upon the well-packed hay or straw below. By these sounds from the children, every one in the room could tell just where either of them was; and the New-Yorker took occasion to make assurance doubly sure by rising to his feet, and handling them as they were suspended above his head. In consequence of all this, he was both confounded and pleased, it being perfectly clear, that, despite all the theories he had previously formed, he seized on the magnificent facts there and then presented to him, as a shipwrecked man would seize upon a plank. Philosophy, or "gab," is one thing; FACTS are quite another: and Brittain thanked his God, as any one might, for these precious ones. If babies are immortal, why not I? Sure enough, why not?

Mr. Brittain was so completely convinced of the extraordinary value to the world of the surprising manifestations he with others had just witnessed, that he made no scruple

of rising to his feet, and telling the assembled people what he thought of what he saw ; and for half an hour he poured forth a stream of eloquence not often equalled, and seldom surpassed, by the sons of men. He portrayed in golden colors the majestic and sublime meanings that crowned these manifestations, and he significantly asked, " O grave ! where *is* thy victory ? O death ! where is *thy* sting ? " He said that the occurrences he had witnessed exceeded immensely all that he had ever seen, or that took place in New York ; that he was firmly convinced that nothing yet developed began to approach them ; and that he was desirous of drawing up a statement, whereto he would like all present — some thirty or more — to append their names, under his own, which statement he would print in " The Telegraph. "

Shortly after, or about this time, Mr. Davenport stated to the writer hereof, that he experienced considerable trouble from the many and persistent efforts that were made by various interested parties to take his children from under his personal control, to the end that they might be made instrumental in serving the cause of spiritualism under widely different auspices. These efforts he resisted, and, by doing so, encountered the frowns of several who had theretofore been, apparently at least, quite friendly toward him.

In the years during which the writer of these pages has been associated with certain clairvoyant phases of spiritualism, a very strange and singular fact has in a thousand instances presented itself to observation, with the persistent and regular recurrence of a mathematical law. That fact is this: I have never known a real and earnest-souled spiritual medium, male or female, old or young, physical or mental, but who has been forced to travel over the very hardest and most thorny of life's roads ; and in exact proportion as such media were sensitive, and susceptible to magnetic and supra-mundane influences, just in that precise

ratio have they been made to suffer: nor do I believe any class of people on earth, taken individually and together, have ever endured such terrible and long-continued anguish as they. It seems to be an almost universal rule, if not law, that such persons are forced to walk graveward through swamps and over lanes, where every footfall is accompanied with horror and attended by pain,—the twin gorgons ever hovering about the head of genius, come it in whatever form it may. Most people admire men, women, and works of genius; but very few know practically, sense, or realize the fearful price at which the thing called “genius” and even ordinary mediumship, when genuine, is almost invariably purchased. The experience of the Davenports amply confirms this view, and, in many respects, in a very striking manner, notwithstanding that, probably, they are the most successful men of their profession and peculiar gifts the world has ever seen. From the first year of their remarkable career, up to this present hour, at every point of travel, in all countries on either side of the seas, everywhere, they have had to meet opposition, and confront armed prejudices, face to face; and were it not for an overruling Providence, which has scores of times almost miraculously saved them, they had long since gone the way of thousands of martyrs who have perished for the sake of the truth that was in them. There seems to be a sort of chronic dislike, almost hatred, in the minds of some persons toward any and every thing spiritual. It seems as if it were a vapor floating in the air,—a kind of mental spore flowing through the spaces, and breathed in by the great multitude of human-kind, which kindles a rankly poisonous fire in their hearts against all those whose mission it is to bring peace on earth and good will to men. The future men and women of the world will marvel greatly at those now living, when they shall, as they will, read that the Davenports, and all other mediums, were forced to encounter the most inveterate hos-



tility; that they, and the writer among them, were compelled to endure horrors baffling description, for no other offence than trying to convince the multitude that they were not beasts that perish and leave no sign, but immortal, deathless, grave-surviving souls.

Mediums *alone* are capable of *demonstrating* the fact of man's continued existence after death; and yet (strange inconsistency of human nature!) the very people who persecute these their truest and best friends, and fairly hound them to premature death or despair, are the very ones who freely lavish all that wealth can give, upon those whose office it is to merely *guess* at human immortality. For simply performing their constitutionally and organizationally appointed task in the grandest drama of the ages, assigned them by a power outside of and superior to themselves, or any other with which we are familiar, these young brothers have met with an amount of violence, detraction, and persecution, well-nigh unendurable, as will be clearly apparent to the reader of these pages before the conclusion of the task before me; and yet, so strong is truth, and so wonderful the manifestations that attend them, many of which the writer has seen, and therefore vouches for as being produced by means inscrutable to him, and which he regards as unexplainable satisfactorily upon any but the spiritual hypothesis, and many others of which he has not seen, but which are attested by credible witnesses, the most important ones of whom are Ira Davenport, sen., and his wife, parents of the two brothers, and from whom by far the greater amount of the facts herein stated were derived between January, 1864, and July, 1869, — so wonderful, I repeat, were their attendant phenomena, that it is really doubtful if even one of their rancorous foes and prejudiced spectators, who has ever given himself time to think of and reason upon what he may have seen of the marvellous in their presence, remained at heart unconvinced that their

producing agents are other than what it or they claim to be, namely, disembodied men and women who have died, yet live, — our brethren who have crossed the gulf of death to convince mankind that souls live ever, though bodies die. As long as men *will* differ on points involving their real interests, the fact is deeply to be regretted; and we must set the thing down as an aberration of poor, weak, half-cultured human nature, — a streak of the perverse running through it: and, as nothing but experience and sterling growth of common sense will cure it, why, we must silently protest, and endure it. But, in addition to this bad fact and its consequences, we are *not* content to be beaten in the house of our friends, or that portion of the body politic which professes the same faith and espouses the same principles that we ourselves do. When the tongue of scandal is set wagging by those of our own household of faith, it is time to put our trust in God, and our own strong hearts and purpose. This truth the Davenports soon had to bitterly learn; for scarcely were they started on their career, than not only were they assailed by the outside world of skepticism, but scores, aye, hundreds, of those who believed in spiritual manifestations, raised the hue and cry against them. And that selfsame cry is ringing through the world to-day; and it is safe to say that they have suffered as much from that cause and source as from the irrepressible opposition of the barbarous hosts.

It soon became whispered abroad that the young Davenports were unconseionable jokers, who were bent on hoaxing the public to its heart's content; that there were no "spirits" whatever about their performances; and that it required but a moderate degree of *finesse* and tact to explode the whole thing, and demonstrate it to be neither more nor less than very simple and quite ordinary legerdemain, or sleight of hand.

And now what a breeze began to blow! — up and down,

north and south, east, west, and all around the compass, at one and the same time, just for all the world like a Boston snowstorm. And the wise ones laughed, "Ha, ha!" and the skeptics laughed, "He, he!" while the Solomons stroked their beards with placid contentment, and exclaimed, "*We* always told you so, — saw through it at a glance, — were not to be sold, — he, he! ha, ha!" And so, when several people swore roundly that they had detected the youths in some of their reputed trickery, they were believed by some, doubted by others, and urged on to further exposures by those who were determined, so it seemed at the time, to either "rule or ruin," — a thing, by the way, that to this day, thanks to an overruling Providence! they have been wholly unable to achieve. The writer will not vouch for the genuineness of any physical manifestations made through the Davenports, or any other media, unless given under such conditions as to utterly preclude the idea of imposition. He *has* on several occasions witnessed in the Davenports' presence things that seemed simply impossible to be performed by any visible agency whatever. He vouches for what he has seen, and no further, but gives the best evidence of others who have seen as much and more.

It happened that a venerable old man named Albro, who published a spiritual paper in Buffalo at the time, became deeply interested in the young mediums. But, from a belief that he had seen trickery palmed off by them as real spiritual manifestations, he became grieved, and, to a great degree, prejudiced against them; for, of all men the writer ever knew, Stephen Albro was the most honest, honorable, open-hearted, and sterlingly true; and, measuring others by his own high standard, he shrunk with unutterable repugnance from any thing like deception. He firmly believed the lads were mediums; but, fearing that bad influences might corrupt them wholly, he, with others, for the good of the cause he espoused, sought to remove them to a differ-

ent home, and to place them under different auspices, separate them from their father for a time, and thus launch them on a new and wider career of usefulness: and all this without the slightest selfish aim, or the least particle of unkindness toward Mr. Davenport, or any other of God's creatures on the broad green earth. There cannot be the slightest doubt but that Mr. Albro had been too attentively listening to the unkind insinuations of persons who had strong desires to have things their own way. Accordingly, in order to do good to the cause, Mr. Albro and a Mr. D. attended a circle at Davenport's, at which it was proposed to place the lads under the superintendence and management of certain persons other than their father, with a view to improving their mediumship, and expanding the area of their usefulness. The matter was debated, *pro* and *con*, by the interested parties, all of whom appeared to act from motives perfectly sound, good, and conscientious. Assuredly so was it with Ira Davenport, sen., and the venerable Albro.

The editor and *his* friends considered the matter from the standpoint of popular usefulness, and the elder Davenport from that of parental solicitude, and a justifiable pride in his children and their remarkable gifts. Of course, some small degree of impatience and irritation was experienced on both sides, but nothing of actual or enduring offence or bitterness upon either side, although there were not wanting those who endeavored to set old and tried friends by the ears, but most happily, in this very important case, without permanent success. Important, I say, because the decision involved the careers of the two most remarkable spiritual mediums the world had ever yet produced. Another thing worthy of note took place at this time,—a fact quite useful to that class of people who imagine that all spirits must necessarily agree on all points, merely because they are spirits; when the fact is, that quite as much diversity

of sentiment and opinion exists among them as between them prior to their disembodiment. Various spirits, through various mediums, espoused the idea of removing the boys from under their parents' control, while others as strenuously argued the other way. Indeed, in an experience of many years, I have never failed to observe that the departed are quite as attached to their own peculiar notions as we are to those we personally entertain.

On the occasion of the meeting, both parties were surrounded by their friends, visible and unseen, and each side felt assured that they were in the right; and hence the debate waxed very warm indeed, until, at last, feelings somewhat akin to anger were aroused, and a deplorable state of things bade fair to be inaugurated between old-time friends and acquaintances. But here again the spiritual world displayed its vast knowledge and power, by forcibly turning aside the threatening current, and causing it to waste its fury on the empty air. All the while the disputants were arguing bitterly, the unseen ones from beyond the starry veil were pouring oil upon the troubled waters, and saying, “Peace, be still!” and in due time their behests were obeyed, and their matchless wisdom vindicated; for out of the trouble grew conditions, which, above all others, were the very ones best calculated to develop the mediums, and place them just where they ought to have been in order to the doing of the greatest possible good to the greatest possible number. It was from lessons like this that wisdom came. May every earthly quarrel and misunderstanding have a similar termination!

Subsequently, Mr. Albro, from, it is fair to infer, the pressure of public opinion, published the subjoined article in his paper, “The Age of Progress,” for Saturday, Oct. 13, 1855, under the caption, “Let Justice be done.”

“We have a report to make of spiritual manifestations at Davenport's rooms, which we witnessed on a recent occa-

sion, and which we will make over our own signature, using the first person singular for better convenience. It is known to our friends in this city, pretty generally, that we have not attended that room for some time, and that we have omitted to mention any thing that has occurred there since we last visited the rooms. The reasons are, that we thought we detected impositions when we were last there, and that many respectable persons who have attended there have had the same impression. Of this, however, we will speak further at the close of this report.

“A lady in this city informed me that a lady friend of hers, just from New York, who was visiting this city, was admitted into Mr. Davenport’s room, with some friend (some two or three weeks since), in the forenoon, when there were no other visitors present, and when only Mr. Davenport, the father of Ira, and one of his sons, were present. She made such a report to the lady first mentioned, that this latter desired to have a similar opportunity to witness whatever manifestations the spirits might be pleased to make. She applied to me to procure for her such an opportunity, and requested me to accompany her there if I succeeded. I made the application to Mr. Davenport, who very politely consented, and appointed Monday of the present week, at ten o’clock, A.M., for the desired *séance*.

“At the time appointed, I called on the lady, and conducted her to the room. Mr. Davenport and his elder son, who is a medium of a very remarkable character, were present; and we four locked ourselves in, that we might be entirely secluded, and safe from interruption. I then took particular note of every thing in the room; saw that the only two ways of ingress were secured, and that there was no possibility for any one beside ourselves to be in the room, or to get in, without our knowledge. Then one of the two inside window-shutters was closed, and the other was partially closed, leaving an opening of about two inches in

width, and, consequently, apertures above and below; through all of which a sufficiency of light was admitted to make a twilight in the room, by which I could plainly see every one around the table; see both avenues of ingress, and detect every motion of every hand in the room. This light, when the vision had become freed from the dazzling effect of the external sunlight, seemed to increase in brightness, till I read an advertisement which hung up against the wall, ten feet from me.

“There was a trumpet, an accordeon, a tambourine, a bell, and some other things, placed under the table for the spirits to perform with. The medium sat next to me, on my left, the lady on my right, and Mr. Davenport on the opposite side of the table. Very loud raps were heard against the under side of the table. Various noises were made by the articles there deposited. I was repeatedly hit with the trumpet; and, after a few moments of this kind of exercise, the trumpet was poked out from under the table, and flourished about, striking the chair and the edge of the table forcibly. The next manifestation was throwing the trumpet from under the table, so that it fell on it, which was repeated many times; and in doing this the spirit showed a hand like that of a colored man; it being large and black. This we all saw repeatedly, as the trumpet was thrown upon the table. My hat stood upon a smaller table, in the extreme corner of the room; and the trumpet was projected in that direction, hitting the hat, and knocking it off of the table. Sometimes it was thrown two-thirds of the distance toward the ceiling. Each time it was thrown, the spirit would have the medium to get and return it to him, under the table.

“About this time, a knocking was heard at the door; Mr. Davenport went to see who it was, and returned, informing us that the younger brother, also a medium, was at the door. We directed that he should come in and sit with us,

as the spirit said he would increase the power. After he was seated, the accordeon was sounded, the bell was rung, and the tambourine was thrown out and upon the table, by a visible hand; all the ten hands present being on the table.

“The next manifestation was the appearance of human fingers from under the table, reaching over the edge of the table, and lapping upon the top of it. Then whole hands appeared in the same manner. These fingers and hands were from the size of a large man’s hand to that of a small child. The largest ones were black, and all the others were white. During the time of these exhibitions, I put my hands under the table, by direction of the spirit. In a minute after, I felt the pressure of cold fingers on my thumb. Then it was grasped by a whole hand. I asked who the spirit was who grasped my thumb, and was told that it was the spirit of my father, the truth of which was soon made evident by my own vision. I then requested my father to grasp my whole hand, which he did with such power, that it reminded me of the almost giant grip which he occasionally made me feel in urchinhood. He had a large and very powerful hand; and the one which grasped mine was like it in both size and power.

“There were many other manifestations, which are of too common occurrence to be worthy of particular note; but there remains one which I conceive to be more interesting than any I have detailed. It was this: by the raps, the spirit called for an umbrella which was standing in one corner of the room. One of the mediums brought it, and put it under the table, closed. In a few minutes, it made its appearance from under the table, opened to its full extent. It came out at the end of the table, at the left hand of the elder of the two mediums, and was raised up, and held over his head; the lower end of the staff remaining below the table, and between the medium’s knees. It was moved



up and down, and twirled round, one way and the other, as it was held over his head. It immediately moved from him to me, the staff passing along against the edge of the table. My head being higher than that of the medium, the spirit found it necessary to elevate it in order to get it over my head. In doing this, a female hand and arm, of the most exquisite model, appeared from under the table; the beautiful hand grasping the staff of the umbrella, and moving it up and down, and turning it, as above related.

“To this narration of facts, to which I append my signature, I am ready at any time to append my affidavit. And, further, I am ready to testify, under oath, that none of these things which I have related were done by any of the five persons in the room, and that no other person belonging to this mundane sphere was in the room during their enactment.

STEPHEN ALBRO.”

“*To the readers of ‘The Age of Progress.’*”

“Mr. Albro having shown me the foregoing report in manuscript, and I being the lady referred to as accompanying him to Mr. Davenport’s room, and witnessing the manifestations which he narrates, I hereby certify that this report is true in every particular, not including what he felt with his hands under the table. And I further certify, that his account, instead of exceeding the truth, falls much short of the reality of what I witnessed. MARY M. TAYLOR.”

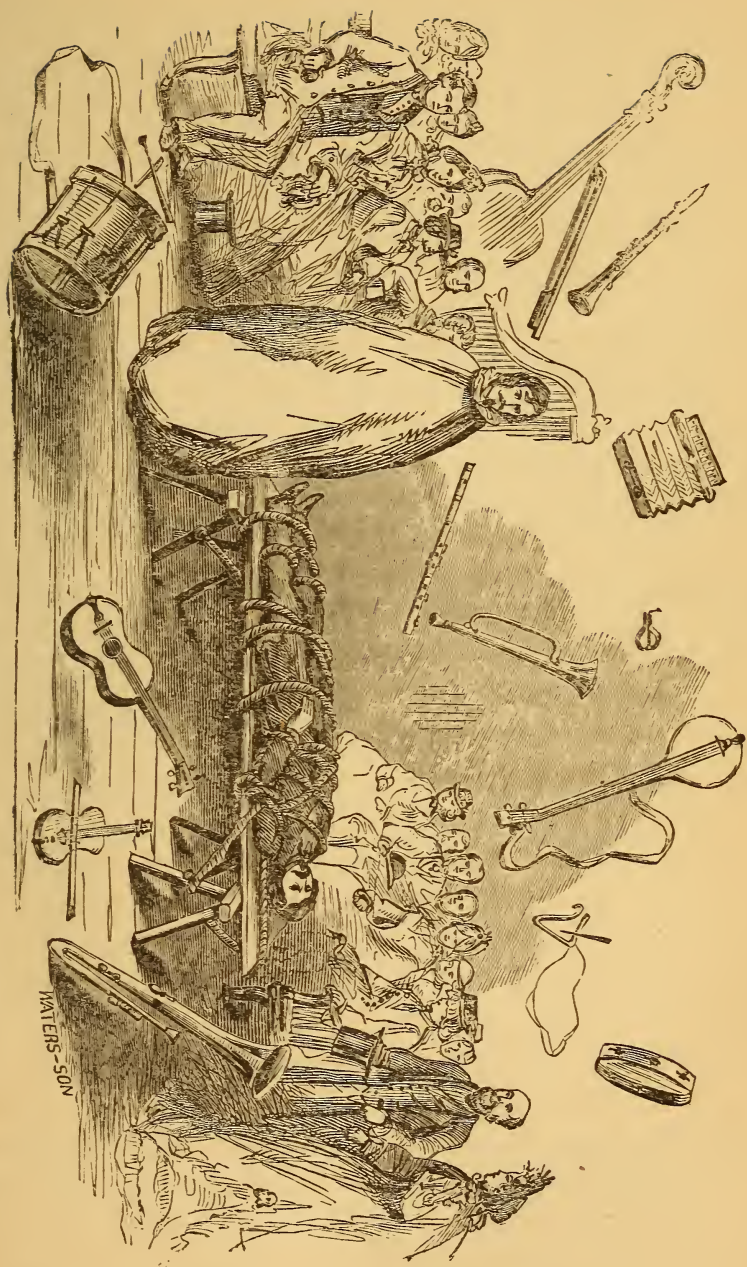
“As respects our refusing to attend the *séances* at Mr. Davenport’s room, as alluded to in the above report, it is proper for us to say, that we entertained suspicions that all was not genuine which we witnessed there at our evening visits. We believed, partially from what we witnessed, and partially from suspicions expressed by other honest minds, that there was deception practised in some of the performances in the dark; and for that reason we staid away, and

made no mention of what occurred there in our paper. We still believe that voices were uttered, and things were done there, independently of the organs and hands of the mediums, and without the consciousness of the mediums. Heaven knows they have no necessity for using deception; for they have enough of genuine spiritual manifestations to astonish the most extravagantly expectant mind."

In a subsequent number of his paper, published some considerable time after the incidents just recorded, speaking of the Davenports, the same editor says, that "it having been alleged by many visitors at the spirit room, that spirits utter language there, with their own voices, or with their own powers, otherwise applied, independently of human physical organs, we determined to ascertain the truth or untruth of the allegation for ourselves, that we might speak *knowingly* on the subject. For that purpose, we went there on Tuesday last, at ten o'clock, A.M. We took with us no one but the elder of the two sons of Mr. Davenport.

"The room had been so remodelled that there is now but one entrance. We entered, examined every inch of the room, even overturning every thing that could conceal the smallest child. We then shut the door, locked it, and pocketed the key. The room was then made dark by closing the window-shutters, and we took our seats at a small table, on which lay a trumpet, a hand-bell, and some other things. The medium then asked us to take his hands in ours, so that we might be certain that he did nothing himself which we might hear or feel. This we did; and in a minute thereafter we heard the trumpet move off the table. It lay on the right hand of us, the medium being on our left, so that he could not have reached it if he had been provided with a third hand. We then were saluted with a gentle tap on our arm, another on our leg, and others on various parts of our person, with the trumpet.

"A large warm hand was laid on one of ours, and various



MAYERS-SON



other things were done, such as shaking the table by which we were sitting, rocking the large table, which was a short distance from us, and thumping on it ; producing concussions as loud as could be made with a hand hammer.

“After these performances, what appeared to be a human voice spoke through the trumpet, apparently at about five or six feet distance from the table, saluting us with ‘Hel-lo!’ I asked, ‘Is that you, Johnny?’ He answered, ‘Yes, it is nobody else;’ or something to that import. He then spoke a few words more, we have forgotten precisely what ; but they were as distinctly articulated as if they had been spoken by any person in the flesh. At this time, a company arrived at the door, unknown to us, but known to the spirit ; for he called for the door to be opened, and our *séance* was ended.

“Some will ask, Was not this ventriloquism ? We answer emphatically, *No* ; for the breathing of the medium, who was sitting as close to us as our chairs could stand together, was distinctly audible ; and, besides, if he had such ventriloquial powers, he could turn them to much better account, as regards both pecuniary interest and fame, than to prostitute them to such unprofitable deception.”

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## CHAPTER VI.

THINGS went on as usual for some time ; but all the while the manifesting power persistently urged Davenport to go from Buffalo, until at last he, to use a very expressive though homely phrase, “got his back up,” and the more he was coaxed, the more he wouldn’t stir a step ; until, finally, he told the brothers that he would stop the circles, square

the whole thing off, and they might go to school again, and keep going till they were gray, for all he cared.

Of course, this was good news to the boys. They were weary and sick of circles, spirits, company, and every thing connected therewith, and gladly hailed the prospect of school jollifications, skating, coasting, nut-cracking, and apple-bees; for it was winter: and, when they went to bed that night, they considered that their medium days were over, they fondly hoped, forever and forever more, amen! And when, early next morning, they packed their satchels with slates, paper, pencils, and school-books, not forgetting to cram their pockets with apples and doughnuts, a happier couple of young roysterers never was seen; and, as they scampered out of the house on their way to school, both parents felt delighted in their children's joy.

They went out of the front gate, their father and mother gazing fondly after them; and that was the last they saw of Ira and William *for nine long weeks*. For over two months, the manifesting powers had threatened, that, if Davenport did not take them away from Buffalo, they would; and, as things looked now, it seemed as if they had kept their word.

At about ten o'clock that morning, Mr. Davenport had occasion, in pursuance of his avocation, to pass by the schoolhouse, supposing, of course, that his sons were there. It was the hour of the forenoon recess; and, as he was walking past, one of the scholars, a former chum of the boys, ran up, and, hailing him, asked him why he didn't let his boys come to school any more. To which he replied, "Why, they *are* going to school: they began this morning." "Indeed, then, they haven't got along yet," said the boy; "for I've been here all the while, and haven't seen 'em yet."

Mr. Davenport went on, not believing the lad's story, and, having reached another group of boys, asked them if

they had seen William and Ira. To which they replied, Yes, they had seen them. The boys and themselves had been playing in an alley-way some time before, when all of a sudden the boys had "come up missing;" that is, they had suddenly disappeared: nor had any one seen where they went, with whom, or in what direction.

This was serious news to Davenport. Retracing his steps to the school and his house, he found no vestige of the boys; and dreadful possibilities, associated with the idea of the Townsend gang, instantly suggested themselves to his mind. He searched all through Buffalo till four o'clock, and, hearing nothing from them, made his way to the *dépôt* of the Lake-Shore Railroad, where he inquired of a young man, an *attaché* of the road, if he had seen any such children as Davenport described. The man replied that he certainly had seen two boys of that appearance; that they had taken the train west at ten o'clock that morning.

At twelve o'clock that night, the conductor of the ten o'clock morning train returned to Buffalo; and Davenport went for and found him in bed at his residence shortly after his arrival. Obliginglly he arose, and, in reply to the inquiries made, informed Davenport, that on the morning train with him went two boys westward, answering to the description of the truants. He said that they had acted in a very strange, half-daft manner; and, when he asked them where they wanted to leave the train, they had not answered him, and would not tell. He then demanded their tickets, but they had none; their fare, and they had told him that the "spirits would pay it," "which," said he, "I thought very strange indeed. I mused on it a moment, and then said that I should charge them half-fare; and, as I spoke, some one gave my shoulder a twitch. I turned to see who it was, but no one was near me; and, as I stood looking, I felt another touch in the hand: and still no human being near me had either touched or given me money; yet, never-

theless, I found a sum in my hand. Where it came from, God only knows; but it was exactly the amount of their fare from Buffalo to a distant village on the line of our road. I am quite positive that neither of the children put the money in my hand; for they sat in the direct focus of twenty pairs of eyes, all intently gazing on the two little crazy boys, as we all thought them to be: and I will be sworn that none of the passengers gave it me, else some one must have seen it done. Presently, the train stopped at Westfield, exactly sixty miles from Buffalo, where they left the car; and I saw no more of your two sons." Such was his story. Was it true?

Two weeks elapsed from that day, or rather night, before Davenport found out where the boys were. They had gone from Westfield to Mayville, six miles from Westfield, where the family had many friends and relatives residing. Here, being known as famous mediums, they, as a thing of course, attracted much attention, and soon became great favorites with everybody in the place.

A series of circles was soon inaugurated, for the entire county became deeply interested in these wondrous children; and hundreds came, saw, and believed, and went home and told others of the great joy they had within, now that immortality was a fixed fact in their opinion.

It was in this village, as stated in another part of the present volume, that the invisibles began to talk in an audible voice, so that hundreds upon hundreds heard it; and the consequence, as might have been expected, was, that the greatest excitement ever known in that rural region resulted. People flocked from far-off States to test the truth of the rumor in proper persons. Meantime, Dr. Carter, a citizen of the place, began a tour of the county with the boys, in compliance with a general demand on the part of the public; and great was the excitement thence resulting.



While all this was going on, the news of the strange phenomenon — the audible speaking — reached Buffalo. To many the news was incredible, and the most set and obdurate skeptic of them all was the father of the boys. He didn't, couldn't, wouldn't, believe a word of it; and therefore he set himself about the business of selecting a committee of sharp, cute men; appointed a night to test the matter in Buffalo; counselled secrecy as to the object in view; and then set off for the country to bring back the youths.

He reached town after a short absence; and, on the night appointed, the circle met as agreed upon, the boys imagining the meeting to be as formerly, and not even dreaming that the persons before them were acting in the triple capacity of jurors, inquisitors, and judges.

They had not been seated over ten minutes, before every one heard a deep, sepulchral, unnatural voice, directly over the table. It sounded as if a man at a mile's distance was speaking through a metallic tube, one end of which opened just above their heads, between the surface of the table and the ceiling of the room; absolutely realizing the first line of the hymn, —

“Hark! from the tombs a doleful sound:  
Mine ears, attend the cry.”

All ears attended *that* cry, and no mistake; for in its solemn impressiveness, tinged with an ineffable but indefinable horror, — the hereditary legacy of the Puritan age to modern humanity, — it made the blood recede to the recesses of the body, and blanched many a cheek with terror.

Davenport, ever fertile in expedients; ever the last to believe; ever contending for truth, and truth only; ever, with incorruptible, unswerving honesty, ready to check a falsehood, — was the first to regain his self-possession, out of which, like all the rest, he had been momentarily startled by

the absolute uniqueness of the phenomenon, and pooh-poohed the whole thing. *He* knew better. No one could convince him that a *disembodied* man could talk like other folks. Not he, indeed! Had he not heard ventriloquists? Ay, that he had! Stuff, fudge, nonsense! And so he made no scruple of charging his sons with deception, and of foisting ventriloquial speech upon him and others as the *bonâ fide* talk of lungless ghosts. Poor man! he afterwards changed his mind.

Davenport had lost sight of quite a series of facts in his rash and hasty zeal to explain away the miracle. First, that ventriloquists cannot "*throw*" the voice out at all; nor even make it appear to come from any particular spot, unless they first *draw the attention of their auditors and spectators to that spot*.

Second, he lost sight of the fact, that no ventriloquist can speak five or six voices at once (as was the fact in that circle, on that occasion), nor in five or six different parts of the room simultaneously, as was also the case. All this escaped him; and on his attention being called to the facts of the case, and the absurdity and untenableness of his hypothesis being indicated, he instantly changed his tactics, and insisted that the power had levitated the boys, and carried them, with the rapidity of lightning, from one part of the room to the other, and that, during their flight, they had spoken. He determined to test the matter right on the spot, then and there; to do which, he whispered to his wife and Dr. Blanchard to silently and secretly get behind the boys, as they were seated in their chairs; to grasp their coats tightly; and to lean forward and listen closely, so as to detect not merely any movement on their part, but the slightest sibilation also. They complied with his suggestion gladly; but no sooner had they done so than "I'm here!" "We're here!" "Here I am!" went the aerial voices, a dozen or more, literally all over the room, from

floor to ceiling, and from end to end thereof. The circle was satisfied; but (will it be credited?) Davenport was skeptical still.

The circle broke up. The strangers went home, and the father, mother, and three children huddled themselves near the stove; for they intended to get good and warm, and have a cup of nice hot tea before going to bed; and as they knew that, as long as a light was seen to shine through their windows, they were liable to be intruded upon by curiosity-hunters, no matter what the hour, they extinguished the lamp pending the boiling of the tea-kettle on the stove.

Not five minutes had elapsed before Mr. Davenport's skepticism went all to pieces, leaving not so much as even a vestige behind to indicate that ever he had doubted.

While the five of them were sitting close together, there came sounds as of a large man in heavy boots, tramp, tramp, tramping, in one corner of the room, and evidently approaching the sitters near the stove; and, nearly simultaneously with these ominous sounds, a voice of unearthly depth, power, and volume, said, in words as clear and distinct as were ever uttered by man, "Davenport, you're a fool! *I'll* teach you a lesson you'll never forget. You have yet to learn, that, in spite of death, a man's a man, all the way from time to eternity, and will be so forever and forever more! You have yet to learn that human beings must talk wherever they may be. They have vocal organs, while on the earth, adapted to the requirements of their earthly or carbonaceous existence. So, in the higher life, they have organs adapted to their better condition; and, when it is necessary to bridge your senses, we can condense material emanations from certain peculiarly-constituted persons called 'mediums,' upon our own more subtle and invisible organs, and thus are enabled to address you vocally; just as we are obliged to convince universal man that he is something better than a perishable brute, by hard knocks on a table or a chair."

For half an hour, that blessed voice rang through that chamber and the souls of those who sat therein. It lectured, expounded subtle laws, encouraged and instructed them in the most eloquent and surprising manner, and, when it concluded, Davenport was a better and a wiser man. All his doubts had flown, never to return.

The parting words were, "Davenport, I'll be with you in two weeks from this day. When I return, you shall learn what your mission to the world is to be; what the nature of the great work is that you and your children are called to engage in. You shall then learn what road to take, and at what pace to go, in order to accomplish the greatest possible amount of lasting and real good to the greatest possible number of men and women, the wide world over. Disembodied people do not return and handle matter merely for man's amusement or profit, nor for their own pastime; but they come as oculists, to couch the cataracts on the eyes of humanity, so that it may see, and, seeing, know somewhat of the pure, clear, blessed light of immortality. You and yours are to be agents in this great and mighty work. You may have to tread in thorny paths, but tread them boldly, bravely; for your guerdon is sure. I am to be known as 'John King.' My mission is not to the select few, but to the millions; for I intend to demonstrate human immortality and spirit-power to the masses, till my name shall be a household word from one end of this continent to the other; ay, and even across the roaring seas shall it go, until the people of far-off lands shall, in their eager thirst for the waters of knowledge of immortality, call across the deep waters, crying to these sons of yours, 'Come, come!' And they shall go, and I will go with them; and wherever *we* land, there will we plant seeds that shall grow and blossom, and bear goodly fruit for the healing of the nations, to the end of time." How well that prophecy was fulfilled, and how thoroughly "King" kept his word, will be seen farther on.

This chapter cannot be closed better than with an article quite *apropos* to the subject just treated of. It will be found quite suggestive, if not final, in its conclusions. It concerns the language of a future state, a subject than which few are more interesting.

It is probable, that, in the future and more perfect state of existence, we shall possess a means of social intercourse free from ambiguity; that the pleasure of advancement will be increased by its consequent acceleration; that, when deprived of the material organs, words and signs will no longer be employed; in a word, that the language of ideality, which a partial improvement of our faculties has here exhibited, will then be so perfected, that terms will be entirely dispensed with, and thought be communicated without the intervention of any medium to distort its meaning or sully its brightness; that ideas will there flow directly from mind to mind, and the soul be continually exhilarated by breathing a pure, congenial atmosphere, inhaling feeling, poetry, and knowledge.

This conjecture derives a further plausibility from the consideration that our present language seems especially adapted to things material; that, in the purely physical sciences, we can communicate ideas with great accuracy and precision; that the difficulty of doing this increases in proportion as our feelings and the quality of mind enter into the subject to which we endeavor to apply it; and, when they become exclusively its objects, it almost entirely fails. Poetry has accomplished much more than the other forms in portraying the passions, sentiments, and all the more striking and complicated mental phenomena; but even that has shed but a feeble light over a small portion of this interesting field of research, or, in bright but fitful gleams, shown the undefined vastness not yet explored. Our present language, then, is wholly inadequate to a subject, which, of all others, must most interest a world of

spirits; as if it were only to carry us to the point from which we are there to start, to give us a glimpse of the infinite regions which imagination has not yet traversed, — the exhaustless sources of thought which accomplished just enough in the exhibition of the subjects of our internal consciousness, to assure us that it also possesses the elements of a power, which, when matured, may become the fitting instrument to gather the treasures of that unexplored immensity. But may we not go farther, and say that even here we have a foretaste, or, at least, a nearer approach to this angelic pleasure? Have we not witnessed the soul, in all its purity and vigor, throwing off the trammels which words impose on its highest action, and, as if anticipating its conscious destiny, in a transport of impassioned thought and feeling, almost entirely discarding the usual mode of expressing them; when the eloquence of the eye anticipates the tongue; when every feature kindles with emotion, and the whole countenance is a transparency, lighted with its glowing conceptions? It is then that terms are most nearly dispensed with, and it is in this sympathetic mingling of thought and sentiment that we enjoy the purest poetry which warms the soul in its earthly tabernacle. Those who have known the raptures of such converse, and have felt its exalting influence, will regard it as worthy a place in a higher sphere, and be willing to admit it to their most entrancing reveries of elysian bliss. Does not this view lend a delightful confirmation to our hypothesis? But the argument derives yet additional strength from the consideration that this faculty, this power of silent yet vivid expression, seems somewhat proportioned to moral excellence, or increases as the spirit predominates over the material part of our natures; that, in most men, it is but dimly visible; that in those of the finer grade of intellect, whose feelings have been cultivated, whose purity has never been sullied by corroding care and ignoble pursuits, nor their sensibility

blunted by too rude collision with the world, it becomes more apparent, while in the sex of finer mould, who are elevated above these degrading influences, whose feelings are more pure, whose sentiments are more refined, and whose spirits are more ethereal, it manifests itself with a softened splendor, to which that of angels may well be supposed only another step in the scale of magnificent progression. It is to the superiority which woman has in this expressive language, to her command of this direct avenue to the finer feelings, that we must attribute her influence in refining and softening the asperities of our nature; and it is owing to the possession of this element of moral elevation, that the finest and strongest reasoning of philosophy has, in this respect, accomplished so much. She possesses not the strength which has been exhibited by some masculine minds, nor, perhaps, even the brilliancy which has emanated from others; but the influence which they respectively exert on society appears in strange disproportion to the apparent causes. The one is as the sun, with his strong beams upon the waters, and the waves proudly reflect his dazzling brilliancy; the other as the moon, whose milder light melts into the ocean, glows through all its depths, heaves its mighty bosom, and elevates it above its common level.

The refined subtleties of an Aristotle, or the glowing sublimities of a Plato, though presented to us with all the fascinations of a high-toned morality, and clothed in the imposing grandeur of a lofty and commanding eloquence, are dim and powerless to that effusion of soul, that seraphic fervor, which with a glance unlocks the avenues to our tenderness, which chides our errors with a tear, or, winning us to virtue, with the omnipotence of a charm irradiates its path with the beaming eye, and cheers it with the approving smile of loveliness. And hence, too, it is, that the degree in which this influence is felt, and its source appre-

ciated, is justly considered as the test of civilization and refinement.

Is there not, in this mild, gentle, silent, persuasive, yet dissolving and resistless influence, a charm, which bears witness to its celestial character? Do we not recognize in it a similarity to that of heaven; and, if we have ascribed it to its proper cause, does not this similarity at once stamp our speculation, if not with the seal of a moral certainty, at least with the impress of a cheering probability?

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## CHAPTER VII.

THE two weeks elapsed, and, true to his promise, the intelligence calling itself "John King" came again; and, *apropos* to this, let us say, that this personage had often shown his face, and remained incarnate long enough to thoroughly daguerrotype his features upon the memories of scores of persons.

Among other developments of this wonderful spiritism, few things are more remarkable than the facility with which certain mediumistic persons are made to draw and paint correct portraits of deceased persons.

The writer has seen many, and heard of more, who were thus gifted or qualified, but, among them all, has only seen the works of two persons that were really great. A Mr. Anderson flourished during the years between 1855 and 1869, who claimed that he could draw the life-like portraits of any deceased person, whose friends sat near him while executing the work. The writer has seen many specimens of his skill, and doubted the spirituality or supernal origin of them all, with few exceptions. Mrs. Mapes, the estimable wife of the professor, for a while was gifted with the most



miraculous power of drawing and painting to the life the most magnificent and exquisite portraits of birds, flowers, trees, and bouquets. In her case, the whole performance was unmistakably spiritual. Another artist was a man named Rogers, and of him I wish to write a few lines.

At a circle, "John King" had once promised Davenport a present; and Davenport, who has the best memory of any one the writer ever saw, took excellent care, by frequent reminders, that "King" should not forget it. Well, it so happened that Rogers came to Cleveland, *incog.*, in order to avoid being pestered, as mediums always are, for displays of his peculiar abilities. He wanted rest and recreation. He knew Davenport; told him the state of the case, and left his portfolio in Davenport's rooms, intending to be present — *incog.*, of course — at the evening circle, and, the better to effect this object, proposed to enter the room after the circle had convened and the lights were out.

Night came. The manifestations were in full play; and the door quietly opened, and a stranger groped his way in search of a seat, which he had not succeeded in finding before "King," in a stentorian voice, yelled out, "Davenport, I'll give you your present to-night. That's Rogers! Strike a light, and put him in the dark ante-room: I'm going to show this company that some things can be done as well as others. Strike a light!"

Mr. Rogers was placed in a small bedroom in Mr. Eddy's house, and remained there exactly thirty-one minutes, during which time scarce any thing went on in the outer room. At the end of that period, Rogers came in, lights were struck; and he held in his hand what to this day passes as an oil painting, perfectly dry, and said to be the exact likeness of the phantom face so often seen by visitors, and which "King" himself declared to be his portrait, correct in every particular. This picture the writer has seen, but, as he is not an artist, cannot describe it; but all who are curious on

that head can procure photographic copies thereof from the owner of the painting, Ira Davenport, sen., without doubt. Let us now return to the circle.

After a variety of physical effects had been produced, "King" vocally told Davenport that himself and boys had a great duty to perform, and that the time had nearly come to begin it; that he must take them before the world to help demonstrate the great fact of man's *post mortem* existence; that the media were powerful, and the operators ready to do their part.

Davenport, as usual, couldn't see things as "King" did. He objected; he was poor; hadn't speech-making qualifications, so essential to success; he was unlearned; couldn't lecture, and twenty other excuses beside: to all of which "King" replied *seriatim*, and effectually demolished Davenport's defensive works, albeit he was loath to own it. He admitted that he shrank from the responsibility involved in such a step, and, in fine, was resolved not to meet it at all. "King" rejoined, the apostles were poor and unlearned; yet, when told that all their wants should be met and supplied, they believed, and went forth to preach the gospel of that era: why, therefore, should not he and his boys go forth to preach the gospel of to-day? He said he now had perfect control of the children; could at any time take them from their parents' control, but did not desire to take that step, and would not, if they would be reasonable, and exercise a little common sense. "King" said he would protect them in mind, morals, health, person, and scrip, and do his best to help redeem the world from its night of error by their aid in disseminating the new truth before and to the people. "Why, then," said he, "do you not consent?"

"Because," replied Davenport, "I am incompetent, and not at all desirous of parading my lack of knowledge to the world's eyes. Oh, no! Catch me at that if you can."

"I have, then," pursued "King," "but one thing to say;

and that is, you can take your choice, either go and hire a proper room for my displays of power, and fix it up by to-morrow night for our use and purposes, else, on the next night, I'll come here, and with an axe will smash things generally, and make a spirit-room of it in spite of your teeth."

Davenport believed "King" this time, and so agreed to procure a suitable place on the very next day. "King" then gave directions how to arrange the proposed room, all of which Davenport performed to the very letter; for he now began to feel that there was to be no retreat. He was fairly embarked on an enterprise never before attempted in the wide world's history.

Next day, he spent much money, and more labor, in arranging his new premises; having done which, he went to Albro and some of the leading men of Buffalo, issued his direction-cards, and told what had been done; all of whom, except Albro, commended him for his public spirit, and promised him the helping hand to sustain an altar, so to speak, where immortal men might, in proper person, proclaim the sublime evangel of immortal life to mortal man.

Modern spiritualism began to make its way upward through the animal creation; for it began with the Fishes, the Foxes, Hares, Koons, Partridges, some Birds, and not a few Colts, with an occasional Gardener, Budd, Flower, gradually ascending to a Child or two, and approaching maturity through Taylors, Fowlers, and other growing ones.

Now, it so happened, that, on the first night, in the new room was a person named Charles Partridge, a wealthy merchant, and widely known in New York, where he for some years published a paper devoted to free thought, which paper was able, and was known as "The Spiritual Telegraph." Mr. Partridge had an inquiring mind, with a penchant for the occult, but also an amazing fund of common sense, a very uncommon commodity in the mental

world of to-day. The writer of this knew him well, and regarded him with much respect for the brave attempt he once made to republish the immortal "Anacalypsis" of rare and mighty Godfrey Higgins. The attempt failed; and, by the unwise parsimony of the so-called liberal world, America lost the richest intellectual treat and feast, which, at that time, had ever been offered for its acceptance. Green grow the grass on thy grave for that attempt, brave, tender-hearted, and good Charles Partridge! Of course, the presence of such a man at the circle was a rare surprise for the boys; and they sobered down their usual exuberance of spirits, and hoped with full hearts that every thing would go off well.

As a matter of course, Mr. Partridge had not failed to hear all sorts of stories concerning the trickery of the two boys. He had, like a good judge, fairly listened to both sides of the story; and, *without* deciding either way, determined to see, hear, investigate, determine, and decide for himself and the great public he represented, solely on the weight of whatever evidence might be presented to him on the eventful evening then close at hand.

Along with Partridge was Albro, who acted queer, cool, offish; liked the idea of a spirit-room well enough, but would not encourage the enterprise in the hands that started it. On the contrary, he insisted that himself should appoint a committee of twelve to meet therein whenever they chose to do so, and to conduct the circle and investigations just as suited their convenience. A fit of blindness was coming over Davenport very fast, when a new idea struck him, and he agreed that Albro should have his way for once; whereupon the old gentleman insisted that Mrs. Davenport and her daughter should leave the room.

This, of course, was rather hard for Mr. Davenport to consent to; and at first he objected *in toto*: but, upon deliberating a few minutes, he clearly saw, that, in the con-

flict of truth against error, the former, in the long-run, is certain of the victory; and for that reason alone he finally consented to the arrangement, and cheerfully left the issue to truth and the Infinite God; with what success will very shortly be seen.

Now, if Albro supposed that their absence would injuriously affect the manifestations, he was in great error; for on that night they were not only splendid, but absolutely startling, and of such a nature that none but an idiot *could* have dreamed of trickery or collusion in the premises. The room was about fifty-five by twenty in size, with a ceiling sixteen feet from the floor; and from one end to the other the power displayed itself in such a variety of ways, that Mr. Partridge was nearly overcome with astonishment, and, the writer imagines, no small degree of fright, at thus *witnessing* what he was told constantly occurred.

One reason why the power was out in full force on that occasion was, that the weather was clear and cool: hence the winter is the most propitious season for powerful physical exhibitions. A warm temperature so weakens the forces used as to sometimes stop them altogether. Dampness and atmospherical humidity act similarly; for then the electricity, which is unquestionably one of the elements or agents made use of, and which abounds in cold weather, is absorbed: hence a sufficiency of it cannot be obtained, at least such is the statement of those who claim to know all about it, — the invisibles.

After the circle, Dr. Oliver, a dentist of Buffalo, inquired wherefore the two females had been excluded. Davenport explained; whereupon the doctor called the twenty-five or thirty persons present to order, and then gave his opinion as to such conduct, in such a strain, that, probably, the excluder did not forget it to his dying day. He demonstrated that the *family* were the media, and that to exclude any member thereof was to cripple the power that produced the manifestations.

Four weeks rolled around, after the opening of the new room, before every thing was settled into working order; but, by the end of that time, the Davenport popularity rose very rapidly, and all the quicker from the fact that the swell-mob undertook to dictate terms to them on and in their own premises.

One night, the rooms were forcibly entered by a gang of rowdies, led on by a fellow who had attained some little notoriety as a professional opposer of what he called the fallacies of spiritualism, — a task for which all spiritualists should have been duly thankful; for all *fallacies* ought to be exposed, and truth alone be promoted. But the man was not honest in his motives: he did not *attempt* to dissect the fallacies of spiritism, but tried to explode and explain away the facts, — stubborn, right down, solid, cast-iron facts, — and found himself biting a file, poor fellow! By dint of long practice, he had succeeded in cracking his toe-joints in such a way as to correctly imitate the raps alleged to be made by the spirits; whereupon he went forth, heralding his discovery that toe-cracking was how the thing was done; thus managing to flatter his own vanity, amuse and delude his auditors, and make lamentable exposures of his own folly, stupidity, and lack of either common sense or common honesty. What if toe-cracking did account for *some* raps, made by tricking mediums occasionally, when a fee offered, and the genuine thump could not be had? Did that account for all? Did it account for raps made on a plate suspended in the air, ten feet off from anybody? Could toe-ology explain talking through a trumpet, or carrying the mediums through the air?

There was a person called Dr. F., who pretended to make raps with *his* toes; and so he did: and it is said he went to Europe on an exposing expedition, and returned with a medal that looked like gold, which some said had been presented to him. No doubt it was a leather medal that he

received, afterwards gilded at his own private cost. At all events, this F. went abroad, lecturing to those who had patience enough to listen to his diatribes, for the express purpose of proving himself and them no better than so many beasts, — how near he was right in his own case, it is not our province to say, — and yet this very man died a confirmed and true spiritualist.

Well, in rushed the mob, led on by the professional toe-cracker; and one of them marched up to Davenport, and informed him that it was his intention to make him shorter by the head: but as Davenport kept calm and cool, and looked sideways upon him, like a hungry turkey at a worm, the rowdy concluded to postpone the experiment.

Now, let it not be supposed that these persons were loafers, from the slums and purlieus of Buffalo: on the contrary, they were so-called young gentlemen, mainly law and medical students; and they came to the rooms in white pants and vests, one of them being well provided with lampblack and printing-ink, wherewith they now proposed to daub the instruments, so as to detect the fraud. Of course, none but themselves knew of that design, as they kept it a profound secret.

At their request, the circle went on, and "King" and others exhibited in fine style; but when the rowdies tried to find their ink and lampblack, they failed to do so. It was gone, nor did they discern whither, until after the lights were produced, when a more zebra-ish, leopard-looking set of rascals were never seen than they were; for the spectacle they presented was perfectly ludicrous, and occasioned a guffaw that will never be forgotten. They had been ringed, streaked, daubed, and speckled all over, from head to feet, with lampblack and ink, by "King." Faces, vests, pants, shirts, coats, — all, all, were daubed with great splotches of black; and no two were alike. One had a great black patch on the seat of his trousers; another's eyes and

chin were daubed; a third was a regular zebra; a fourth had a black nose; a fifth wore a black breastpin six inches square; and the whole looked so irresistibly funny, that screams of the most uproarious laughter greeted them: but they enjoyed the fun as well as anybody, for it was of no use offering mutual sympathy, as no sooner did one of them open his mouth to condole with his fellow than both burst forth into an irrepressible roar of merriment. F., only, lost temper, because he had been not only foiled, but made the laughing-stock of all the rest. Poor F.! He swore he'd get Davenport indicted next day; and, in order to increase his choler, Davenport coolly offered him five hundred dollars to try it on, and five hundred dollars more for a sight of the bill when found, and five hundred dollars more to prosecute it afterwards. Poor fellow, he did try it on, and got laughed at more than ever for his pains. After that, he dried up the fountain of his vindictive spleen, and simmered down to toe-cracking as long as it would pay. "*Sic transit gloria quack-ibus pedes.*"

The crowd left in capital good humor; and "King" congratulated the family on having gotten rid of the toe-ologists, once, and for all time, and then said that he was about to show those who remained something worth seeing. Those present were then directed to sit in line, and take hold of hands around the table, after which, several voices talked for some minutes through the trumpet; and then that instrument was placed upon the table, and a light was struck; whereupon the circle disbanded for the night.

Three months glided rapidly and pleasantly away, every night during which, the power called "Richards" demonstrated his abilities in various unique and particular ways; among others of which were long monologues, and pious exhortations, with and without the instrumentality of the horn, followed, invariably, by a seeming miracle still more remarkable than that, if such a thing be possible.



Every night, just as soon as the spectral tongues began to speak, the sounds were invariably accompanied by others, like unto the rattling of a stiff sheet of paper on or near the ceiling, and directly over the table; and, in an instant thereafter, a sheet of paper, uncrumpled in the least degree, fell upon the table; and, when lights were called, these sheets were found to be neatly and closely written all over, in a hand-writing whose beauty and evenness approximated copper-plate engraving in excellence and precision of execution; and this writing proved to be beautiful, eloquent, and profound essays, in brief, upon various important themes and topics. Some were on science, others upon art, literature, philosophy, medicine, ethics, æsthetics, electro-dynamics, religion, theology, archæology, hermeneutics, optics, painting, sculpture, geology, anthropology, palæontology, biology, and a score of others equally profound and interesting, and all alike exhibiting evidences of deep and varied research; and many of them are still in possession of persons in all parts of the country, who gladly took them as mementoes whose significance was great, and whose value was beyond all price.

This was another pentecostal season, wherein tongues *not* cloven spake words of lasting cheer to scores and hundreds.

These events bring us down to the year 1856.

Early in the forepart of that year, there began to take place a phenomenon, in presence of the two Davenport boys, which has been witnessed by quite ten millions of persons in all parts of the Union (save the extreme South), inland and sea-slope, and also in Europe: that is to say, the most astounding effects were produced in their presence, when they were securely tied, hand and foot, head and heel, as tightly as ingenious men could tie them, with from three yards of cord to two bushel-baskets full of clothes-lines, — tied, in some instances, until their very clothes were hidden beneath the multitudinous coils of rope.

It has been reported abroad, that skeptics first hinted at having them tied, in order to preclude deception on their part. That is a mistake. The tying was first not merely suggested, but commanded, by the invisibles; and not to provide against trickery, either, but to afford themselves opportunities of so demonstrating the reality of their own existence, interest, and power, as to forever confound all skepticism, no matter of what degree, or whence emanating.

Ropes were accordingly procured; and Davenport announced that he would hold three circles each day, at ten, three, and eight o'clock respectively; and eight musical instruments were provided for the use of the intelligences, consisting of tambourine, guitars, violin, trumpet, and bells.

There was a great crowd present on the first night of the new order of things, the majority of whom were doubting Thomases, through and through, and out and out; and among them, perhaps, was Davenport himself, the composition of whose mind was such, that the practical motto of his life was, "Seeing's believing, feeling's the naked truth, tasting is truth herself, and all combined is knowledge."

Down sat they at the table; out went the lights; up went the trumpet in the air, followed by the seven other instruments, all clanging, thrumming, roaring, jangling together, in one indescribable *olla podrida* of chaotic sounds, as if a band of musicians had suddenly gone stark staring mad, and were avenging themselves by torturing the instruments.

Meantime, in the very midst of this Babel or Bedlam, the sound of flapping or snapping of ropes was heard, accompanied with a chorus of "Oh!" "Ah!" "Take care!" "You hurt me!" "Don't, I tell you!" "Quit, now!" "Oh, dear!" and other cries suggestive of somebody being interfered with in a very unpleasant manner. The boys were being tied for the first time, and it proved to be a somewhat painful operation, though, after the second or third trial, it was easy enough, and became rather pleasant

than otherwise, as is usual in all such cases; for all persons suffer more or less during the primary operations of the intelligences upon them, as the writer of these pages can certify from personal observation.

When the lights again shone in the room, the instruments were found scattered promiscuously over the floor, and the boys were lashed so that they could not budge an inch.

Again the lights were put out, whereon the eight pieces flew up and about the room, like straws before the tempest. The racket kept up for a few minutes, and then ceased. It was but the prelude, or overture, that had been played; for immediately there began the most splendid and magnificent grand concert ever yet heard emanating from such a source in Buffalo, and, probably, in the whole wide world.

The reader has not forgotten "Richards," or the peculiarities of that distinguished personage. Well, "Richards" was in a gay and festive mood that night; for he seized the brass trumpet, and, bidding the people in the circle keep their eyes open, he blew through the instrument; and from out its bell-shaped mouth, as glories from a cornucopia, there issued a perfect rain of fire-flecks, like the golden shower from festal rockets on the nation's gala night. Blue, red, green, pale violet, scarlet, crimson, purple, emerald, amethyst, and gold, out, out they flew, till thousands floated in the air at once.

And now the rain changed to small balls of white fire, rushing from the trumpet's mouth to the ceiling, where they struck, burst, each into a thousand fragmentary coruscations, and floated floorward, fairly deluging the air with a magnificent fog of fire.

Again the lamps were lit, and the boys found, as before, firmly tied, but so wholly absorbed by what they had seen, as to have apparently forgotten their pain and the extreme uncomfortableness of their situation.

Once more the room was darkened. "Richards" was yet in a gallant mood, determined to effect a radical cure of Davenport's skepticism that time, and no mistake. The scene of his next display was in a clear space at the farther end of the room; and it began with the revolution of a tiny point of fire, so as to form a bright ring, about as large as a two-cent piece. This ring, as it revolved, gradually increased not only in diameter, but in its substance; for the circle itself soon became as large as a coach-wheel, while the band of light itself was all of eight inches across,—a magnificent circle of brilliant flame, revolving with the speed of lightning,—and in the very centre of this wheel stood, perfectly revealed to all eyes present, the figure of a gigantic man, slowly describing a circle with his extended right arm and hand, from the fingers of which appeared to issue the fire whereof the wheel was constructed. It was an appalling sight.

At this point, a fine opportunity is offered for the presentation of the writer's theory, both as to "Richards," and how the wonders were produced; but as it is not his business to construct theories, but to chronicle facts, he leaves the reader at full liberty to cogitate on the matter, to his or her heart's content, for,—

"Theories which thousands cherish  
Pass like clouds that sweep the sky;  
Creeds and dogmas all shall perish:  
Truth herself can never die."

These things, novel, startling, unprecedented as they were, did not embrace all the marvels of that eventful night in Buffalo; for Davenport, at the suggestion of "King," had previously provided himself with a bottle of olive-oil, in which a large stick of phosphorus had been dissolved.

He now took a handkerchief, and completely saturated it with that pestiferous solution, and laid it on the table,

whence "Richards" instantly took it, rubbed his hands with it, and then flew all over the room, displaying his gigantic fingers and palms to the best possible advantage. This was not all. The room was twenty-five feet wide by forty-five in length, and, as said before, sixteen feet in height. "Richards," not content with what had already been done, now took the handkerchief so rapidly from end to end, from side to side, and from the floor to the ceiling of the room, that, in the cimmerian darkness, it looked like so many convolving belts of pale-blue fire; and this exhibition lasted for at least one minute, or until the phosphor-light became faint and exhausted.

This display was perfectly satisfactory in all respects save one, the odor, which was insufferable; and not a few of those present experienced very unpleasant effects from the inhalation of the pestilential fumes, which, as is well known, not only offend the nostrils, but beget a peculiar excitement in certain organs of the body, sometimes extremely difficult to allay.

"Richards" was evidently aware of these facts; for he threw the handkerchief away, and proceeded to untie both the youths, placed the instruments in their hands, and then lifted and carried them all over the room, the boys meanwhile playing, or, rather, thrumming, the instruments, like mad. Then the performances were varied by letting William down, and elevating Ira to the ceiling, where, with a piece of red chalk, the boy wrote upon it whatever name, sentence, or word was suggested by the people "down below." This feat was repeated night after night; Mr. Davenport regularly washing out the old marks every day, so as to have a "clean slate" next time.

The writer is perfectly well aware that some of the things herein related will, and, from the astonishing character of most of them, must, appear incredible, and be set down as utter impossibilities, having no firmer foundation on and in

truth than the vivid imagination of the writer's authorities for the facts stated. And yet not one of the marvels here recounted but has, in this month of August, A.D. 1869, at least a dozen living and perfectly credible witnesses. After all, such things or statements ought not to surprise us, for we live in an age of marvels, and, startling as the facts herein described unquestionably are, there is not the slightest shadow of a doubt but that they will be entirely eclipsed, surpassed, and overshadowed by a higher order of phenomena, before ten years shall have rolled away from this present hour.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

ABOUT this time, a genius out West, connected with a little weekly journal, endeavored to startle the world; for he announced that he had cut from an exchange an article which suggested to him certain principles, whereon and whereby the whole thing could be accounted for without the intervention of either disembodied human spirits, or any other super-mundane intelligent force, personage, or power. This is the article quoted:—

“The Davenport Brothers exhibited their wonderful powers to a large number of spectators, last evening. We are inclined now to the opinion, that, somehow, an electrical force is concentrated in a sphere of which they form the centre, and that this force is subject to their will, under certain conditions, while the conditions themselves are not under their control, or, at most, but partially so. We confess to our ignorance of any philosophical principles that can explain the phenomena we have witnessed.”

On the strength of this, he announced that electricity,

and nothing else, was the motor in the whole affair, and concealed galvanic batteries did the entire business: he was perfectly sure of it. This hypothesis, baseless as it is, has, most assuredly, nevertheless, found innumerable advocates, who had it their own way, until a man who knew better offered a public reward of ten thousand dollars to any one who would demonstrate that the phenomena were produced by *any other than* the power that claimed to do them, — namely, disembodied human beings. He proposed that the discoverer should have a ten-acre lot, full of all sorts of galvanic and electrical apparatus, all in full play, and pledged himself to hand over the money just as soon as he, by aid of said batteries, performed any one of the feats constantly occurring in presence of the young Davenport.

It is needless to say, that, though the offer still stands good, the reward has not been claimed, nor the prize even contended for; and the “back-action electricity” people observed the *sub silentio* for a considerable space of time thereafter.

It would puzzle any electricity man to perform the following feat, one which is quite common in the Davenport circles.

Ira was frequently placed standing in the middle of the floor, whereupon the mysterious “King” would request some member of the circle to take hold of the boy’s hands. A candidate for the purpose always quickly responded to the invitation; and, as soon as he had hold of Ira’s hands, the holder would feel that the boy no longer touched the floor, but was floating in the air, very often heels uppermost, and swaying to and fro, like a human banner flung to the breeze. But the performance did not terminate with such a display of force. It was but the introduction. It very frequently happened, when what the power called the “conditions” were good, that, after the banneresque display,

the boy would resume his upright position on the floor, the stranger still grasping both his hands. The twain of them would instantaneously float upward, until their heads touched the plastering over them; and this, too, no matter how heavy might be the person levitated along with the boy, for sometimes men were thus lifted who weighed over two hundred pounds. Scores of people have made that experiment, many of whom still live, in the year of grace 1869.

The room where these things occurred was an up-stairs apartment overlooking the street, on the opposite side of which was a bank; and the intelligence more than once declared not only its ability, but its intention, to carry Ira out of the window, across the street, and fairly deposit him on the roof of that edifice, and return him safe and sound again. But the hazard was too great for any of the boy's friends to accept, though Ira himself was perfectly tickled with the proposition, and insisted that the experiment should be tried. What cared he for the chances of a broken neck? Never a bit. And so, one evening, he slyly raised the sashes; and the power, nothing loath, seized and bore him three-fourths of his length out of the window, and would in another instant have had him clear from the house, had not those present grasped him by the legs and pulled him back, he all the time yelling to be let go, not by the power, but by those who held him back; and it almost broke his heart because they would not let him run the risk of being converted into Davenport jelly on the pavement sixty feet below.

While things were working thus charmingly, the inventive invisibles perfected a new development. This consisted of nightly concerts of vocal music by amateur singers, accompanied by *post mortem* instrumentation on horns, trumpets, banjos, violins, guitars, bells, and tambourines; to some of which concerts the writer, with sixty thousand others, has frequently listened in New York, Brooklyn,



Albany, and elsewhere; that is to say, the instrumentation, not the vocal accompaniment.

Those who heard the "spirit concerts" in Buffalo describe them as being exquisite to the last degree; there being two distinct male and four female voices.

Occasionally, these *post mortem soirées* were varied by whistling concerts; and no wind-instruments could equal their strangely wild and mournful melody. The only unsatisfactory circumstance about the affair was that no one could remember the music, and no provision was made for writing it down, as ought to have been done.

The spirits were full of fun, and quite prone to the perpetration of jokes, verbal and practical; one of the latter of which has already been recorded in the lampblack and ink affair, wherein a lot of young scapegraces went fishing for fun, and got fairly caught themselves.

One night, "King" spoke in measured rhyme for nearly an hour, and wound up with, —

"Lo! the poor Indian, wandering all forlorn,  
Sees God *in clouds*, and hears him — *in a horn!*"

The writer was once present when advice was asked of one of the invisibles, who replied, "I'm giving it to you — *in a horn!*" He was speaking through the trumpet.

Another display of the power consisted in this: persons frequently would hang bunches of keys upon a nail by the aid of a step-ladder, and out of the reach of any one in the circle. These keys would be taken down as soon as the light was out, and flung into the laps of their respective owners; and never was a mistake made in that respect.

At one end of the room stood a table, whereon visitors used to deposit their hats, shawls, and over-garments. Near it was a pail of water, and flagons to drink it with.

One night, there came to the room a merchant from Illinois, a stranger in Buffalo. When he came in, Davenport

took his hat, placed it among others on the table, showed him a seat, put out the lights, and the circle began; the boys, as usual, being quickly tied up by the power, and floating over the room. Soon they were reseated in their chairs in the circle, which was full twenty feet from the hat-table alluded to.

It was customary in those days to have a long rope, round which a silvered wire was coiled the whole length. This rope rested on the laps of those present, and was firmly grasped by their hands. Its object was said to be that of confining the various emanations of the circle to the circle, so as not to interfere with the aura from the media, which the power used in order to produce their various effects; but, on the night in question, this cord had been passed through the coat button-holes of all present, except the boys.

Soon after these latter had been reseated, the sound of pouring water was heard in the region of the hat-table, whereupon Davenport sung out, "Take care, there, how you meddle with that water! I beg you not to spill it; for you may wet somebody's clothes."

To this there came a sepulchral answer from "King," "Don't trouble yourself. I won't. I know what I'm about. Quick! Strike a light!"

Davenport did so, and beheld a sight that almost caused him to lose temper; for there, right before him, on the circle table, stood the stranger's hat — one of Leary's best — brimful of water from the pail. And the longer Davenport looked at it the madder he got; but the stranger kept cool, said, "Never mind," acquitted the boys and everybody else of doing it, and said there were plenty more hats in the world, and money to buy them with. Lights out.

Said Davenport, "Johnny! O Johnny King!"

Said "King," "O Davenport! what's the trouble?"

Said Davenport, "Johnny, you're a scamp!"

Said "King," "Davenport, *you're* a fool!"

Said Davenport, "I've told people their things would be safe; and here you've gone and ruined a man's hat."

Said "King," "Not that you're aware of. Keep cool. I'll show you that I'm a hatter before long;" and with this the hat went from the table. The water was heard as it was poured back into the bucket; and then the hat went flying about the room, now banging on the table, then upon the ceiling and floor, until it was perfectly clear that the stranger's head-gear was ruined utterly beyond redemption. "King" called for a light. The unfortunate *chapeau* was found on the table, turned completely inside out, with the maker's name, all wet and soiled, sticking out like a lonely epitaph in a forest churchyard.

If any reader wants to know how difficult a feat this last was, just let him try to turn one of those black stovepipe hats inside out without cutting it, that's all. The hat was *not cut* in the least.

By this time, Davenport's indignation was considerably above the boiling point. It was not merely the price of the hat that troubled him; but he, as usual, began to think, "Why, what *will* Mrs. Grundy say?" and took the thing to heart twice as much as the owner of the hat did, who, strange to say, seemed to rather like the "fun," as he called it, than otherwise. Davenport couldn't stand it any longer; and he said some naughty words to "King," who replied, "You're another!"

"But you've got me in a scrape for a new hat; for that one's spoiled, sure."

"No, I haven't; just listen a bit." And again was heard the heavy tramp of footfalls up and down the room, accompanied with hat-smashing choruses, for full two minutes.

Lights were brought; and that was indeed "a shocking bad hat," its condition being finely expressed by a person in the room, who described it as being "smashed all to

thunder." It was indeed an outrage upon Leary and his customer.

When darkness once more reigned, "King" asked Davenport what he thought of that tile? who replied, he thought he had raised something quite warm with it.

"Well, then," said "King," "let there be light;" and there was light: but no banged-up *chapeau* could be found, high or low, in that room. That hat was gone, clean gone, and was nowhere to be found; and this, too, in spite of the fact that every door and window, passage-way and entry, had been and still was securely locked and fastened. Where was the missing head-gear?

Lights out. Said the voice, "Well, what d'ye think o' that hat? Couldn't find it, hey? I'm a hatter, as I mean to show you before I have done with you all to-night."

The circle was then resumed, and went on finely for an hour or two longer, finally breaking up at a late hour. The stranger's hotel was not far off; and he concluded to go thither bareheaded, insisting, all the while, that Davenport should not, as he proposed, send him a new hat in the morning; for what he had seen proved to him man's immortality, — a knowledge cheaply purchased at the cost of a myriad scores of hats. He would go home a happy man, convinced of three great truths, —

1. That man survives the ordeals of disaster and death.
2. That all of us are much higher than our lives; that all our evil is on the surface, our priceless value deep within.
3. That our external acts, thoughts, selves, worked out even to the best advantage, are very insufficient tests of what we really are.

The Illinois merchant was a happier, a better, and a wiser man.

Davenport, lamp in hand, now opened the door, and began to guide his guests streetward, down four flights of stairs. They had descended three of these, and had reached Dr.

Blanchard's door (the doctor himself coming on behind), when one of them sung out, "There's a hat!" and, sure enough, there, on the entry floor, stood a hat,—one of Leary's best. The stranger picked it up: it was his own hat, bearing his own private mark, and totally uninjured, even in the slightest degree. It was not even damp, much less wet through; nor was there the least vestige indicating that it had ever passed through a *kingly* ordeal: on the contrary, it was smooth and glossy, just as if it was fresh from the workman's hands.

There was not the slightest doubt about it being the identical hat that had been filled with water, and battered and jammed beyond all hatly forbearance; for the hat had been examined a dozen times during the evening, and now again, by its owner, who, on each occasion, said, "That's my hat, for I see my private mark upon it, which mark no one is aware of but myself!" *How did King* do all this?

It would seem that the manifesting potencies had already produced sufficient variations of their peculiar effects to satisfy both their audience's appetite for the marvellous and their own ambition as performers. Such, however, was not the case; for "King" and "Richards" both announced that they were about to commence a series of visible, in addition to their audible, experiments.

The first of these the writer finds recorded in a little brochure then recently issued in New York; whence it is transferred, verbatim, to this volume.

Says the compiler of the pamphlet alluded to,—

"One evening, when I was present, the boys were seated each side of a round table, with the various instruments lying upon it; and, when unbelievers in the phenomena were invited to step forward and tie the boys, Gen. S. M. Burroughs, an able lawyer of Medina, and at that time a member of Congress, stepped around the table, and tied William

H., and, no other one advancing, I stepped forward and tied Ira E. As I had been in there several times, and found the cords that had been tied with so much care were untied and thrown upon us with surprising quickness, I felt mischievous, and thought that 'Johnny King,' as the spirit was called, or whoever untied the rope when I did the tying, should be longer in doing it than his usual time. I put the boy's hands behind him, and after tying around one wrist as tight as it would bear, without distress, and drawing a hard knot, and laying the other wrist upon it, tied him as a farmer ties a pig's feet; and, after tying several hard knots as tight as I could draw them, put the rope around the back of the chair in various places; and, after tying several knots at each place, put it around the lower back round of the chair, and tied several more there. I then arose, and stepped back three or four feet, still facing the table, with Ira E.'s hands between his back and the chair-back, and before my face, with the light still burning. The Hon. Mr. Burroughs, having begun first, had got done first, and came around the table to where the audience were standing. As I arose and stepped back, William H. exclaimed, 'I am loose!' Mr. Burroughs then went back to him, and found him unbound. He then tied him again. I remained standing where I was, while he was doing it, with Ira E.'s hands before my face, and no one passing between me and him, nor near me, and the light still burning; but I did not watch the rope, because I had no suspicion of it being untied. But, when Mr. Burroughs had got the other bound again, the one I had tied exclaimed, 'I am loose!' That centered my eyes upon his hands, and his wrists remained as I had put them; but, to my astonishment, 'Johnny King' had shown me that it was not as I thought. The rope had been loosened before my face, with the full blaze of light upon it, so slyly and still, that I had not noticed its motion; and the audience, back of me, surprised that

the youngest had been untied without their seeing any motions, were, like myself, gazing upon the table and the lads; yet no one had noticed any motion of the rope, that was plain before their eyes. The knots were not entirely untied (that would have made so much motion in the rope that we would have seen it); but they were all loosened so much, that each one formed a circle of about two inches in diameter, and the rope hung down from the wrists. The knots below the lower hind round of the chair were necessarily loosened first, and the rope drawn several feet through them; yet it was not possible for Ira E. to have untied them, without getting out of the chair, and coming behind it. As any motion of the hands to get loose would have been seen by me, and by the audience back of me, I gave 'Johnny King' full credit for his dexterity in loosening the rope before my eyes with so slow a motion, like the growing of a vine, that I did not see it done."

The same person also states a fact that may as well be quoted here as in any other place:—

"After that, they left Buffalo, and took a journey into Ohio, stopping and holding *séances* at various places. At Painesville, Ohio, skepticism rose to so great a height, that skeptics bet much money with believers in the wonder-working power, that they could fasten the brothers, without distressing them, so that nothing could be done. The father and boys consented to let them try. Crowds gathered, and curiosity and anxiety were at fever-heat. The skeptics first tied them securely, and sealed the knots. Then, bringing sacks, they put one over each boy, and nailed it to the floor. The light was extinguished. Thrum, thrum went the fiddle; and, to the astonishment of all, a tune echoed through the hall, and things went on as usual. Then, quickly raising a light, they found all things about the boys remained as they had fixed them."

When the light circles were proposed, no one could even

guess what the character of the proposed tests was to be; but all were extremely anxious to find out.

The first experiment, made in Davenport's room, consisted in the invisible powers holding down a massive round table to the floor, in spite of the most strenuous efforts of eight strong men to lift it. Then the selfsame eight strong men would attempt to hold it down, against the applied force of their viewless antagonists to raise it; and the harder they tried to keep it still, the more lively it became, until, finally, it wiggled and wiggled itself, apparently, all over the room, and carried the men along with it beside.

Again a change. Three tables were provided, at each of which sat one of the young Davenports, and when instruments of music were placed under them, they were played upon all at once. And now, still another phase presented itself; for the hands that moved the instruments commenced handling the ladies' feet, and actually removed their shoes; they feeling, palpably, the fingers that untied the laces. At first it made them feel quite nervous; but they soon got used to it.

During these performances, the hands of everybody present were on the tables, in plain sight of all in the room; and, while thus placed, other hands, not of the circle, would put the shoes upon the tables; and the hands that did it were plainly seen — frequently six or eight of them at one time — by all who were present.

Ladies were accustomed to throw their handkerchiefs under the tables, and their gloves, also, all of which would, in a few moments, be thrown in their laps, made up into the most fantastic shapes, such as rabbits, dogs, dolls, fruit, fans, birds, and beasts. As might have been expected, the female visitants improved these rare opportunities to procure souvenirs of the spirits; for the gloves and handkerchiefs were carried off by them, tied and arranged as they were, and kept to be shown to their friends. Probably over



a hundred of these mementoes are still to be found within the precincts of Erie County alone.

There was in the room one table of huge dimensions, being seven feet by five, and three inches higher than ordinary tables, made so to prevent anybody from lifting it with their knees, and thus "*humming*" the people. Davenport placed ten chairs on that table, and ten heavy persons in the chairs; and yet, although it was a dead lift of nearly two thousand pounds, the power floated it a foot clear from the floor, and dandled it about as easily as a child would a toy weighing sixteen ounces; and, while that was being done, hands, not of embodied human beings, were seen thrumming the guitars.

One morning, there came to the rooms a family from New York, named Cook, who were on their way to Lancaster, Ohio, to witness the spiritual manifestations alleged to occur there in the rooms devoted to that purpose, by Jonathan Koons, and they merely dropped in on their route, to see and hear what they could in Buffalo, not even dreaming that the Davenport manifestations were equal to those of Ohio, whereas, in fact, they were, and are to this day (July 22, 1869), not only superior to those of Koons, but to those of the Scotchman, Dan Hume, or any other medium now living, of whom the writer has any knowledge. This family, a father and two daughters, walked up into the room, and stated their errand. While yet they were speaking, there entered a lady from Brooklyn, named McDaniel, on a similar mission. The Cooks and she were old friends; and the *rencontre* was quite agreeable, as it appeared also to be to the invisibles, for they forthwith began to astonish their visitors after the regular showman style.

First came spectral, then solid hands, which latter proceeded to pick the ladies' pockets, *sans cérémonie*, conveying their trophies all over the room, and then returning them intact to their respective owners.

The ladies, also, much to their surprise, mingled with no slight dash of indignation, distinctly felt hands under the table, tugging away at their feet, and presently off came their shoes, one after another; and, as fast as they were taken off, they were tossed upon the table.

There was a Mr. Campbell present, who, considering himself slighted, began to banter the power to touch him, but, for a time, unsuccessfully. At length, he said he didn't believe they could, and challenged them to make the trial; but no sooner had the unwise speech been uttered, than whack, whack, went the trumpet across his shins; whereat his choler rose to high tide, and he backed off from the table, using not the choicest language as he did so: but, worse and worse, the heavy trumpet, in the hand of an arm, followed him up, and banged his tender spots till he fairly writhed with agony and rage, — a rage which was perfectly impotent; for he, and all the rest, plainly saw that no visible human body was attached to that wonderful arm. He had “touches” to his entire satisfaction.

So well satisfied were the Cooks with what they had witnessed, that they gladly forewent their projected trip to the Koons's circle in Ohio.

One of the most beautiful and significant events of that daylight *séance* consisted in one of the ladies recognizing what she believed to be the arm of her deceased sister, temporally re clothed with the semblance of mortal flesh, and that, too, precisely as said hand and arm had appeared before that sister's decease; for it had peculiar and unique marks and moles upon it, that could not possibly leave room to doubt its identity with the one now so strangely re-incarnated.

Not long subsequent to these occurrences, a son of Judge Love of Buffalo conspired with another young law-student to have some fun at Davenport's expense, which fun was to partially consist in treating the junior Davenports to a com-

plete suit of tar and feathers, previous to which luxurious indulgence (for tar and feathers is quite a costly suit, having been frequently paid for in leaden coin from the muzzle of a six-shooter), they were, with their compatriots, about a score in number, to "lark" the circle nicely, upset the tables, steal the instruments, and "elevate Edward" generally. Such was the design: now for the execution thereof. They had arranged things so that the instruments were to be seized and kept possession of the instant that the lights were out, which proceeding was, of course, to put the "spirits" in a quandary, and do the business effectually for Messrs. "King" and "Richards," whom they believed to be mere myths, while the real manifesters were supposed to be the Davenport family, old and young. But, quick as they were, to snatch *at* the instruments, certain invisible men there present were a great deal quicker; for scarcely was the light turned off, than a dozen instruments were flying, and playing "Chaos come again," in all parts of the room, simultaneously, to the unadulterated astonishment of Love, Chapin, and Company. For some time previous, Davenport, to guard against interruption, had been in the habit of locking the door as soon as the assembly had convened, and putting the key in his pocket. He did so on the present occasion, to guard against any successful carrying out of suspected rowdy plans on the part of the young and mettlesome law-students.

Sitting in the room that night, close by these youngsters, was a grave and sensible man, named Horatio Seymour, a lawyer, and a relative of the governor of the State of New York. This gentleman reasoned with the young men on the impropriety of their conduct, and tried to win them over to a fair and candid investigation of what it was clear they neither apprehended nor understood; and, contrary to all expectation, what he said evidently impressed them, for young Chapin said, "Perhaps it may be spirits, after all.

If it really be the work of dead men come back again, all I want is to know the fact; for I am interested in the solution of the immortality question, quite as much as any other man possibly can be. I propose to test it, here and now. If there be invisible human beings in this room, let them tell what's in my pockets; and, if so, I'll believe."

"Well," said Davenport, "suppose we out lights, and try. That'll settle the question in a trice."

Accordingly, the question was asked of the governing power, and through the horn came the following replies:—

"You have a scrap of paper in one pocket; some keys, a steel-bead purse, containing silver coins,"—mentioning their number, value, and their respective dates,—every item of which was absolutely correct in all respects, as was demonstrated by ocular inspection, two minutes or less after the answers had been given.

Chapin's skepticism and F.'s toe-ology straightway became *non est inventus*; and the student's lip quivered, and his manly cheek turned pale, as he murmured, "I believe!"

All young men have nicknames, by which their comrades know and speak of them; so had young Love,—not the pestiferous little wretch who goes about playing havoc with people's hearts, but the student thus known,—and, after the circle was over, the young men resolved to treat the subject respectfully in future, and to indefinitely postpone the tar-and-feather programme. They went home, and next day Love had business at a place ten miles out from Buffalo, and drove there in his chaise. Of course, his experience of the previous evening was fresh before him, and formed the staple of that day's conversation and thought. While transacting his affairs, he heard of a girl-medium, who lived some six miles farther than where he was. She was represented as being one in whose presence spectral hands and phantom figures were occasionally seen, while the rapping phenomena were things of every-day occurrence.

Away went Love to find and test this girl. He reached the house, made inquiries, and solicited a sitting, which being granted, he fastened his horse, and went up stairs to wait the lady's leisure. He was shown into the front parlor, and leaned against the wall, while amusing himself glancing over the pages of a magazine which he found upon the table; the lady still being non-present in the room.

While thus engaged, he heard sounds upon the wall, like fingers with thimbles on them, drumming upon the wainscoting. He listened eagerly.

“Is that a spirit? if so, rap three times.”

Three raps came directly at his back.

“Can you tell me who you are?”

Three raps: affirmative.

“And who I am? — my name — by the alphabet?”

Three raps came in response: whereupon he began to call over the alphabet, and, pencil in hand, wrote down the letters that elicited a rap.

Presently the raps ceased, and he placed the letters in order, as received, and found this sentence had thus been spelled out, letter by letter, “I am Johnny King, and your name is ‘Browsey.’”

This was Love's nickname in Buffalo, and the one of all others by which his friends designated him.

From that hour, that man and his friend, Chapin, were convinced of the great importance of these new and strange developments. They subsequently went to the battle-fields of their country, and achieved great distinction and lasting glory on many a well-fought field, from whence one returned to gladden his friends, but the other took his flight to kingdoms inhabited by the gone-before.

Previous, however, to the occurrences just mentioned, and shortly after the event at the girl-medium's house, one of the young men, during his parents' absence on a visit, had the Davenport boys at his house one whole night; and they

had what Americans call "a high old time," you may depend: for not only were Ira and William and Love and Chapin, with their cronies, in high fettle, but "King" himself appeared to have realized the old man's desire who "wished he was a boy again;" for he pulled the clothes from the beds, doused all hands with plentiful rations of cold water, upset tables, chairs, dashed pillows all over the house, dragged beds into the floor, and the bedsteads after them; and, in short, left the house in such a condition as to realize the saying that they had been playing Tophet, and no mistake.

Another incident, simple in itself, yet carrying an irresistible weight of evidence substantiatory of the spiritual and humano-spiritual theory is this: There was in Buffalo a lawyer whom we will name for the occasion H. S. This gentleman had investigated the phenomena at Davenport's, Brooks', and other circles, until conviction, in his case, as to its source and origin, became a certainty. In 1856, he was a constant attendant upon "King's" *séances*, and had become quite familiar with that singular identity. He frequently entered the room when not a ray of light afforded the sitters the slightest clew as to who had just come in; but no sooner would he reach the door than "King" would yell through the trumpet, "That's old S. Why don't he come at proper hours? Look here, my fine old gentleman, if you don't learn to keep better hours, you sha'n't come in at all." At another time he would cry out, "That's old S., and he's fuddled with cognac and whiskey: don't let him in."

One night, the power hailed H. S., and said, "I say, S., you're sober now, ain't you? ha!" — "Sober! why what do you mean by that?" — "What do I mean? Why, you rat! you wasn't out on the plank-road to-day, I suppose? Oh, of course not! And a great change hasn't come over you since you got home? *Perhaps* not. And you didn't get tipsy, both of you, maybe? and you didn't drive up in your buggy to ——'s tavern, and order dinner? *Perhaps not.*"

And they didn't bring you chickens that you were too fuddled to carve up? and you and —— didn't pull them to pieces, and munch them down, like a couple of hungry soldiers? and you didn't upset the gravy, and ruin the landlord's table-cloth and carpet? you didn't throw chicken, potatoes, bread, and every thing else on the table, at each other, I suppose? and when you paid your bill and got in the buggy, the horse didn't run away with you, and upset you both plump and square in the ditch, and smash the front of the carriage into fifty pieces? Of course not. And you didn't manage to get home by a roundabout way, change your clothes, tell each other not to breathe a syllable about it, and then come here, looking as demure as a virgin pullet? Oh! I reckon not."

H. S. was so completely astonished at this revelation of a prank of his, that, for the life of him, he could not resist admitting its absolute and literal truth, even to the very slightest particular.

The Davenport family now became, if possible, more interesting and popular than ever; for scarce a circle was holden, that some new and startling thing did not occur. ONE incident shall have a place in history right here.

Libby Davenport was one day sitting as medium, alone, for several persons who had casually dropped in (her brothers not being present at the time), when a thing took place of so wonderful a nature as to almost surpass belief. Indeed, to even record it would seem to be an unwise act, and would be so, unquestionably, were it not that witnesses yet live in Buffalo who saw it.

There came out in the dim twilight of the room, from beneath the table, what looked like a phantom child of about two years old, delicate, small, and surpassingly beautiful and lovely. The gorgeous being flitted hither and thither about the room, upon the floor, and then, by a power inscrutable to man, rose in the air, and alighted like

a butterfly upon the hands of the people, spread out, palms downward, on the table.

It deliberately stood upon every hand, and then, stretching forth its immortal fingers, its lips wreathed with an angel's smile, and its features glowing with seraphic love and joy, it touched the forehead and cheek of every person at the board, and smiled most lovingly as it did so. Soon it again rose in the air, sailed majestically over the heads of the people, alighted once more upon the floor, moved hither and thither as previously, and then passed from sight beneath the table. Instantly, a score of people bent down to look after it; but the seraph was gone.

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## CHAPTER IX.

A GENTLEMAN of Rochester, N.Y., writing under date of Dec. 24, 1855, concerning Ira Davenport, sen., and his two sons, says, —

“It having been announced that a *séance* would be given to a very small number, at ten, A.M., on the next day succeeding ‘the eventful night’ referred to, we were present, and allowed to take a seat at the table with the mediums, and, of course, were left entirely free to adopt such precautionary measures against imposition as our judgment might dictate. Being satisfied on this point, the room was darkened; and, almost immediately, there commenced a series of demonstrations, which no amount of credulity on our part could conscientiously lead us to any other conclusion than the one which refers their solution to disembodied intelligences. The trumpet was repeatedly spoken through at an elevation which precluded the idea of any one of the audi-



tors or mediums using the same. The instruments and bells floated around the room, keeping up an incessant vibration and ding-dong; being frequently lowered, and brought in contact with the limbs, &c., of those present, sometimes so forcibly as to leave a painful impression of several minutes' duration. The hat of the writer was taken from his head. We felt it moving, and immediately swung our hands round, to feel if any one was near. Not succeeding, we asked if any one present had taken that liberty; when immediately we felt a cold pressure on the cheek, as if touched by a folded hand. Besides this, we were touched with the instruments, and handled on various parts of our person, with such force, and under such circumstances, as to utterly preclude the very idea of any practised deception. On the appearance of a light, we proceeded to search for the hat, which had so strangely left us, and found it on a seat on the other side of the room. We then left the chair, and took a seat with two other gentlemen, at some distance from the table. The light was again put out, and similar wonders re-enacted. Although sitting, as did one of the gentlemen near by, with one leg stretched out to its full length, it was no impediment to frequent knocks over the head, knees, &c. Now, no embodied presence could have possibly approached either of us, and avoided detection, under the circumstances. Another gentleman, whose hat, containing papers, was placed on an adjoining seat, had abstracted from the same one of the papers, which was deposited in the lap of Mr. H., who was sitting in an oblique direction, on the other side of the room. He spoke of the fact, when a request was made to have the abstracted papers returned. Presently, we heard a crumpling sound approaching. The gentleman, when the rattling sound indicated a near approach, reached out his hand. He felt his hand seized by another: it melted away in his grasp, and left him in possession of the paper he had requested. Many

other curious circumstances might be related; but we will pass along to the events of the evening. Here, again, we must only outline a very few of the most startling and striking phenomena which took place.

"In addition to the thrumming of the violin and guitar, and the ringing of bells, whilst they were apparently floating around the room, at various elevations, a tambourine was carried around, and beaten with as much force as if struck by the most powerful of human hands. The spiritually-produced light, as we are bound to regard it, which manifested itself this evening, was truly beautiful. Commencing at an elevation of nine or ten feet from the floor, it exhibited a series of rapid circles, scintillating with brilliant points of light. Commencing at a single point on one side of the room, it seemed rapidly to evolve its line of fire, until several circles were visible in a continued line, as beautiful as a string of stars, and more brilliant than diamonds. Indeed, so convincing did the events of this night seem, that one gentleman loudly asked the question, if any man of common sense could reject such convincing testimony. 'Hold!' spoke the voice from the trumpet, which seemed within about a foot of the ceiling: 'common sense is the most *un*common sense we have.' A colloquy now took place, with the narration of which we must close this article.

"A gentleman from the other side of the room, and sitting obliquely to the point where the trumpet-voice emanated, asked if the spirit (or 'John King,' as he calls himself) would converse with him? He was answered in an instant by the same voice, close to his person, 'I can't do it.' So rapidly was the space traversed and the answer given, that it was looked upon by many as one of the most convincing proofs of spirit-identity of the evening. To a statement made by Mr. G., that his friend M. was a 'second-advent' man, it was quickly replied, 'I'm a first-advent man.' Questions became somewhat general, when it was finally decided

that M., the editor of a journal devoted to the propagation of the doctrine of 'the annihilation of the wicked,' &c., should have the privilege of questioning the spiritual intelligence. We will here remind the reader again that the voice speaking through the trumpet seemed to proceed from an elevation of within about a foot from the ceiling; and it was also at some distance from the questioner. The questions and answers, as far as we remember them, were as follows:—

“‘Do you believe the Bible to be the word of God?’—  
‘Some of it.’

“‘Well, what portion of it?’—‘Every man must judge of that as he would any thing else.’

“‘Do you believe it to be inspired?’—‘Some of it.’

“‘Do you believe in a physical resurrection?’—‘No: old bones flying through the air? Ha, ha!’

“‘Are you dead?’—‘Man never dies.’

“‘How do you know?’—‘By experience.’

“‘But the Bible says (here the gentleman quoted a passage from Job, which, taken literally and in one sense of view, seemingly favored his theory of annihilation). What say you to that?’—‘I don't believe it.’

“‘But the Bible tells us it is so. What do you say to its plain declaration?’—‘I say, that, if it says so, it is a great error.’

“‘Then you don't believe in the Bible?’—‘Not all of it.’

“‘What authority, then, have we to appeal to, to decide for us which is and which is not true?’

“Here a gentleman in the audience said that every man must be his own authority, decide for himself; to which a quick response came, ‘That is it!’ and loud raps were given on the table at the same time.

“At this point, several remarks were made by a portion of the audience, which had the effect of preventing further

questioning on the part of the reverend editor. The manifestations, however, continued for some time longer; and we should judge that it was generally conceded by those present that most convincing proofs of spirit-presence had been given.

"The following series of sixty-four questions, by persons in the body, were responded to by persons out of the body, in the usual manner. They are presented not as finalities, but as mile-stones, so to speak, upon truth's great highway."

[I am not aware of the existence of a better series of answers to an equal number of really vital and important questions propounded to and purporting to have been received from the spiritual world. Since this book was written, the author of it has produced a work upon the human soul, a note concerning which will be found at the end of this present chapter. It is *not* noticed here by way of an advertisement, but because the author solemnly believes, that, together with what has fallen from his pen in this volume, revised during an illness and season of pain that bade fair to translate him to the farther shore, it contains matter regarding humanity beyond the grave that can nowhere else be found to-day on earth. And he believes that God and the spiritual world ordained him to *that* specific labor.]

But to the questions and answers:—

"Is it true, that, beyond the lunar orbit, there are seven concentric regions, denominated spheres, which may be called the country of spirits? that the country has all the features of terrestrial scenery, but with a much greater beauty, even in the third sphere, while the beauty of the other four spheres is greater in proportion as they are higher?' — 'Yes.'

"Is it true, that, in those regions, there are mountains, plains, rivers, lakes, brooks, rills, trees, flowers, birds, beasts, and every attribute of the most admired portions of this lower sphere?' — 'Yes.'

“‘Is it true, that, by the higher spirits, music, poetry, and all the sciences and fine arts, are highly and zealously cultivated, and that the pleasures of social intercourse are more highly enjoyed than upon earth?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Are the narratives of the translation to the spirit-world, which I have received from my sister, brother, William Wiggins, and the spirit Maria, to be relied on as coming from them, and as correct in their representations of the usual process of transference to the spiritual world after death?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘How many spheres are there, this world being the first in the series?’ — ‘Seven.’

“‘How many inhabited by spirits?’ — ‘Six.’

“‘Are there sub-divisions? if so, how many in each sphere?’ — ‘Six.’

“‘Are the sub-divisions equidistant?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘How are they designated?’ — ‘Either as circles or planes.’

“‘Are they concentric with each other and with this globe?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘At what distance from the terrestrial surface does the lower boundary of the second sphere or first spiritual abode commence?’ — ‘Many miles.’\*

“‘Are the atmospheres of the spheres more rare in proportion as they are more elevated?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Do they increase in beauty as they are higher in the series?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘How are they illuminated?’ — ‘By a peculiar sun within the spiritual spheres.’

“‘Is our sun visible in the spirit-world?’ — ‘No.’

\* The reader must understand that these answers were given by persons but recently dead, and who, therefore, knew less about the spiritual world than other inhabitants who had been longer there; and that these are less exact than they would have given after a longer residence there. For fuller information see “After Death; or, Disembodied Man.”

“‘If lighted by a peculiar spiritual sun, invisible in our mundane region, do the rays of that sun consist of undulations of an all-pervading ethereal fluid, analogous to that assumed to exist by the undulationists?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Or do they depend upon the last-mentioned fluid for evidence?’ — ‘No.’

“‘Are there not peculiar elementary principles appropriate, severally, to the spiritual world, and likewise to the material world?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Is it not an error to suppose that any of the ponderable elements recognized by chemistry can contribute to the organization of the person of an imponderable spirit?’ — ‘Of course not, without a loss of ponderosity, which involves a loss of identity, or a transformation.’

“‘Is not the luminiferous matter which causes the effulgence of spirits analogous in its effects to that of luminiferous insects, though consisting of a spiritual material entirely different from those which enter into the luminiferous matter of insects?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Are the spirits on the lowest level of the second sphere destitute of effulgence?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Are they absolutely enveloped in a dark halo?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Is reformation indicated first by diminished darkness, and subsequently by augmented effulgence?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Is the sphere of a spirit known by the relative brightness or darkness of this halo?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Is the lower circle of the second sphere disagreeable as to its scenery?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Is spirit Maria’s description of the spheres correct?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Does this feature lessen as the circles are higher?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Do the last-mentioned circles present an aspect less agreeable than that of our sphere?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘At what point does the scenery become superior to any in our world?’ — ‘In the third sphere.’

“‘What designates the boundaries of the spheres so as to make spirits perceive when they are passing through the partition between one and another?’ — ‘Diversity of impression made upon the spirit.’

“‘What confines a spirit to his proper level, so that none can mount above it into a sphere to which he does not belong?’ — ‘A moral specific gravity in which the weight is inversely as the merit prevents the spirit from rising above his proper level.’

“‘Are spirits of different densities, rarer, or more refined in constitution, as they are higher in rank?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Has the most dense or most undeveloped spirit any weight? if not, how are they denser than those who have progressed farther?’ — ‘They are, in the spheres, heavy as compared with other spirits; but their weight would not influence a scale-beam in this mundane sphere.’

“‘If the lowest have no weight, wherefore are they more competent to give physical manifestations by moving ponderable bodies?’ — ‘They do not act by weight; but all spirits, under favorable conditions, and with certain means, possess, in a minute degree, a portion of that power possessed to an infinite extent by the Deity, — of annulling gravitation and *vis inertię*; and, though they cannot exercise such powers without the aid of a medium, the medium is to them as an implement in the hands of a human being.’

“‘How are such movements produced consistent with the law that action and re-action are equal and contrary?’ — ‘Gravity and its inertię being neutralized, the physical law of action and re-action does not prevail against the spirit volition.’

“‘Do spirits employ their limbs in effecting manifestations?’ — ‘Not necessarily.’

“‘Have spirits a power of creating that which they desire?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Like the genius of Aladdin’s lamp, can spirits within their spheres create habitations at their bidding?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Does the creative power exist in the spirits of each sphere? or is it denied, as I have been informed, to those of a second sphere?’ — ‘It is denied.’

“‘Is this creative power more extensive as the sphere to which the spirit belongs is more elevated?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Are the spirits of the third sphere happy?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Does happiness become greater as the rank of the spirit becomes higher?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Do the spirits of infants go to the seventh sphere?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Does an infant dying before noticing any thing go to that sphere?’ — ‘Some of them.’

“‘Does it require care analogous to that given to infants in this world?’ — ‘It is carefully instructed.’

“‘Do infant spirits come down and reside among kindred, more or less, visiting, as they grow older, these mundane scenes, which may compensate them for their loss of opportunities by premature death?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Does not the inability to communicate with their kindred cause them to be unhappy under these circumstances?’ — ‘They are not rendered unhappy, in consequence of the peculiar manner in which such circumstances act upon the spirit-mind.’

“‘Do such spirits, as, for instance, those going to the other world while children, but having attained mature age, — say forty, — become companions for their parents and friends in the spheres, who may have died after their maturity? or is there a too great simplicity or childishness?’ — ‘In purity and simplicity they are contented to live.’

“‘Is the love of children who have died very young, as great to their parents and relations who remain in this



world, as if they remained alive in their society?' — 'Greater.' [Doubtful! — P. B. R.]

“‘Is there a deference shown to spirits on the same plane, commensurate with their superiority in learning, science, and wisdom?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘The object of marriage in this world being manifestly the perpetuation of the species, consistently with the preservation of refinement, and the welfare of offspring; and there being no such motive in the spiritual world, how can there be any motive for any such indissoluble ties?’ — ‘Between spirits joined by matrimony in the spheres, there is a greater blending of mutual self-love into one common sentiment than in any other friendship.’ [And marriage, also. — P. B. R.]

“‘Have spirits any fluid circulating through an arterial and nervous system, which is subjected to a respiratory process analogous to that which our blood undergoes?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘As spirits are weightless, is not this fluid devoid of weight?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Has it any color?’ — ‘No.’

“‘Does the gaseous or ethereal matter respired by spirits pervade the mundane spheres?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Do mortals breathe it, as a means of sustenance to their spiritual organizations, while incased by this “mortal coil”?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Does it supply the nervous system?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Is it communicated to inferior animals?’ — ‘Yes.’

“‘Do fishes require atmospheric oxygen while swimming (water consisting of eight parts in nine of pure oxygen), in order to get at the spiritual gas associated with the former?’ — ‘The spiritual gas, imperceptibly accompanying atmospheric air, is especially necessary to fishes.’

“‘Creed is alleged to be productive of no obstruction to ascending in the spiritual world. Belief, being an *involut-*

*tary* act of the mind, has no merit or culpability attached to it, excepting so far as it is the consequence, or is productive of prejudices: the advance of a spirit is retarded by these defects.

“‘As in the spiritual world there is no necessity, desire, or passion, which spirits can gratify by violence or fraud, on what is virtue founded? Where there is no motive or power to do wrong, where is the merit to right?’ — ‘In the spheres, vice is displayed by the endurance of bad passions; virtue is manifested by love, purity, and the aspiration for improvement.’

“‘As the diversities of human character are clearly the results of organization and education, neither of which can be controlled by human beings, whose merit is the inevitable consequence, how can there be any culpability? It is true that a man can act as he wills; but is not his will the creature of his passions and reason jointly? If his passions be increased, will not reason be less capable of controlling them? and, *vice versa*, if his passions be enfeebled, or his reason strengthened, will not his passions have less sway? Does it not follow, that while we must, in self-defence, resist or restrain those who cannot govern themselves, should we not commiserate all who have the misfortune to be so badly constituted?’ — ‘We are no more able to answer that than you.’

“‘When a being, virtuously constituted, is murdered by one of the opposite character, who is most an object of commiseration? Which is most favored as a creature of God? Is not the difference between these beings analogous to that of the dog and the wolf? Both creatures of God, is one to be extirpated, the other cherished, as an inevitable consequence of the laws of creation?’ — ‘The victim is most favored.’

“‘Has not the analogy between a wicked or a savage man, and one who has the advantage of a good organization

and education, a better exemplification in the case of a wild dog, and one brought up by a kind master, since the wild dog is reclaimable, may be reformed, and so may the bad or savage man? Hence, in the spheres, is not punishment or restraint made with a view to reformation, rather than as a retribution for inevitable defects? — ‘Correct.’

“In the first place, provision will undoubtedly be made, hereafter, for the culture and the exercise of all the intellectual and the moral faculties of our nature. Heaven will not be a monotony. All which belongs to our nature, that is not hurtful and sinful, will there find free scope for its development. Nothing, then, which we learn here, will be lost. No elevated taste is cultivated in vain. No healthy affection withers under the touch of death. There are strains of melody, and sighs of beauty, and holy friendships, in the spiritual world. Every thing which God has made on earth, and which man has left untouched by sin, is only a symbol of something greater and more resplendent in reserve for the holy hereafter. What music will be heard in heaven! what prospects will charm the eye! what thoughts will be uttered there! what variety of employments! and yet nothing servile, nothing selfish!

“How is it, then, that we shrink from the future? Why does eternity come before us as a cold, blank void, — a sea without a shore, moaning and groaning under a starless sky, where the soul floats like a helmless wreck, solitary and despairing? Because there is a stain of corruption on the soul, which needs to be washed out; because the sense of sin makes us afraid.

“In the second place, we observe, that, to the righteous, the future will be a state of constant and unending progress. The law of this progress may be essentially the same as it is now, only it will operate under greatly improved conditions. We shall never reach a point where we shall stop, and make no further advance; for then there would lie before us an eternity without occupation.

“All mortal creatures are capable only of a limited improvement, because theirs is a limited existence. Man must advance forever, because he lives forever. The time will undoubtedly come when we shall look back upon what we have acquired and done in this world, as we now regard the experiences of our earliest infancy, and we shall wonder that we thought ourselves so wise.

“And, finally, our future destiny will be in precise accordance to our deserts and character. We shall reap what we have sown. We shall begin our life hereafter as we close it here. There is no such thing as separating the character from the destiny.”

We close this chapter by a few sentences upon the much mooted question of biology *vs.* spirit-power.

The human mind is so constructed, that it is susceptible of varied influences from every department, from every element, from every principle, from every nook and corner of the boundless and illimitable univercœlum.

The great majority of men move on a plane, where elemental forces of material nature impinge upon their being, and give direction to both thought and action. Consequently, such minds can take cognizance only of outer nature, and the phenomena attending them.

A small minority of the race have ascended to a higher plane, where idea is first distinctly perceived; and, consequently, such are moved upon by the waves of mentality flowing from the earth-educated mind. It is the transition point between materialistic mind and the purely spiritual.

A small minority of this last-named class become fascinated and influenced by thoughts which are partly spiritual and partly mental, and, being dazzled by their brilliancy and power, yield thereto as to a guiding star; and, the power being new, they worship at its shrine.

These minds are constantly perceiving dim rays of spiritual truth. But, instead of leaping up towards the light,

they plunge down to the reservoir of earth-evolved thought, and soon become lost in the mazy labyrinths thereof.

Another minority of minds, having passed beyond this entire plane, perceive spiritual light in its purity, and become the subjects, or mouth-pieces, of supra-mundane and trans-earthly mind; and that which comes to earth through these instrumentalities is invariably harmonious, and consistent with itself and the great principles of nature.

Vast and mighty is the human soul! What is that mysterious thing? Where shall mortals look for the dwelling-place of that occult principle, whose powers are not limited by time or space? But who shall tell us where it dwelleth? It sendeth forth energies beyond the outer limits of space, and reacheth even unto the illimitable vortex of the august soul of the living God. The human soul hath ever lived. Time never was when it had not a conscious being, — conscious only in its inmost essence, ere it fell, as a raindrop, from the pulsating soul of its Father, God. He, she, it, or Deity, ever was, and ever will be; and the deep depths of God's soul conceived the thought of creating, like unto itself, that which would infinitely represent and correspond to the still more infinite over-soul. When *it, he, she* or God, *order, life, intellect, law, will, melody, matter, and harmony* conceived this thought, the fiat went forth, and the circumvolving spheres were convulsed with the tide which rolled over and laved the shores of the boundless realm of infinitude; and forthwith the material realm was ushered into being. I tell thee that matter is but a form of mind. There are higher and lower degrees of mentality, which, when commingled, constitute that domain known as *substans*. This material realm, being subject to that superior to itself, gave birth to worlds. The refining processes, acting through illimitable centuries, produced organic material form. Stomachs fitted to receive directly the same substances, which, without it, would have ultimated them-

selves into gross matter, digested and refined the receptive cells, and man became a living soul.

Now, this is the origin. We will now endeavor to discern a portion of the nature, first, of God, second, of matter, and third, of man. In other words, man is the crystallization of the waves of thought which proceed from God; hence, never can reach Deity, for the reason that the sphere which emanates from God is less refined and perfect than God himself, as is self-evident.

Man, throughout the countless eternities of progressive unfoldings, can never reach the intra-edeonic plane,\* or can never enter mentally within the vestibule which leads into the temple where dwelleth Allah, God, Power, in *esse*; for the simple reason, that being composed of the outflowings of Deity, and that, too, in their lowest form, it follows (and here is a new philosophical truth) that man's proclivities, tendencies, and aspirations will be forever,—not to God, but to the outflowing attributes, powers, and essences which proceed from God in rays.

Now, these rays are so infinitely prolific of such super-celestial perfection, happiness, wisdoms, and melodies, that man will always feel the affinitized relations subsisting between them and him. As a child, when grown up, remem-

\* Edeonic is a word signifying the inmost essence of spirit. In man's progressive unfoldings, there are varied and various degrees of excellence, refinement, enjoyment, power, and capacity,—human, spiritual, angelic, celestial, seraphic, edeonic,—each a discrete remove above the other. The edeonic plane of being is that point of progression which man reaches on his upward journey, when all his powers, capacities, qualities, essences, and attributes coalesce, and mind becomes a unitary kingdom, instead of a confederacy of faculties, governed by a master principle, or king faculty; and is that point where man ceases to be moved by material essences, forces, and powers, loses his attractions for matter and the outgrowth of matter, and commences the movement on the other plane of the universe, and describes an angle with his previous progressions, and begins to develop the deific qualities which have thereunto lain dormant within the inmost recesses of the secret soul.—*P. B. Randolph.*

bers only certain features of the mind of its parents, and feels attractions thereto, and affinities therefor, constantly ascending the plane of being, the receptive vesicles of the human soul will be enlarged and expanded; and therefore the soul will forever drink in new powers, in exact proportion to its expansion and expansive capacity.

God dwells in the midst of the profoundest depths of the intellectual and spiritual universe. He emits, hourly, countless myriads of distinct rays. These rays are attributes and powers, laws and principles; and every human soul that is born has a peculiar affinity to one of these rays. Now, this fact discloses a grand arcanum.

The ray strikes the soul at a point, and diverges triangularly, and widens the field of observation, as procession goes on, and progression does its work. Therefore, no human, immortal being will dare come in conflict with any other immortal soul, nor will one human being dwell in the same physical inmost self-heaven of another; but each will be a complete law unto him or her self, positive or negative. From the positive ray, man derives wisdom; from the negative, woman love. The spheres blend, and I will elucidate it thus:—

[Here the fore and middle fingers of the speaker's hands were spread open in the form V, and their ends put together, forming this figure  $\diamond$ .]

The spheres blend, for the divergences of the female and male souls perfectly correspond, and the celestial marriage takes place. Now, all men correspond to some principle-ray from God, some attribute and perfection of Deity. A man dies on the earth, he enters the spirit-world, meets his other self, and they two become one; being the completeness of the second sphere. Now, mark you, that *one*, also, corresponds to a positive or negative principle, and it progresses to another sphere, where the duality positive meets the duality negative; and so on, *ad infinitum*, until God,

or Deity positive, produces a God infinite, negative, and the unitized democracy of humanly developed gods shall be complete, and correspond to and receive direct rays of living light from the God positive of all gods.

The nature of mind is the nature of God. I wish you to understand, that I refer to a union of the mental, psychical, and interior attributes of the unitary solidarity of humanity, and not to a blending of forms, or coalescence of individualities. Soul will ever expand through, first, the universe of life, which will occupy its entire attention till it shall pass the seventh realm, the lower plane of which it now occupies (that is, referring to the universe of life); then it will describe an angle in its career, and enter the universe of order, at which point of its progress it will faintly discern its ultimate destiny, which will be but begun when it reaches that point; and it may take millions of years for the human race to reach it. Here it shall cease to be human, so august and sublime will be its power, and begin to realize its God-like and true deific nature. At the end of its journey, it will pause a while, and arouse to the exercise of creative energy.

Such, at least, are the teachings of what claim, and the writer believes, to be human spirits themselves, as received by him in Buffalo, in 1856, through his own brain, while investigating the world-famous Davenport mysteries.

NOTE.—The work referred to a few pages back is, "After Death; or, Disembodied Man." Location of the Universe of Souls; its Extent, Scenery, the Route thither; Customs, Habits, and Destiny of Mankind after Death; the Sexes there; the Career of the Soul subsequent to Death; that the Principle of Sex continues to exist; the Dwelling-Place of Disembodied Souls; Mental, Social, Moral, and Physical Sins (diseases rather), and their Effects upon the Human Soul.

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## CHAPTER X.

REV. B. F. BARRETT, a Swedenborgian, under date of Jan. 8, 1856, writes as follows concerning the Davenport phenomena, in reply to an attack upon him in "The New Church Herald," a Swedenborgian organ:—

"MR. EDITOR, — Your comments upon my communication concerning the spirits, published in 'The Herald' of Dec. 27, are of such a nature as to demand a reply.

"It is not particularly pleasant for any one to be held up in a public journal as an object of *pity*; as one who had been strangely wrought upon, deluded, and misled, by the spirits; as one who — poor fellow! — had permitted himself to indorse and advocate a doctrine which cannot be regarded as true, &c. And it is the more unpleasant for a man to be thus pilloried in the columns of a paper which he has endeavored to aid, and had supposed he had aided, somewhat, with his pen.

"Still, I am not particularly disturbed by this; but I

have become somewhat accustomed to treatment of this sort: and, when a horse has once become *accustomed* to the curry-comb, he does not wince under it like a young colt. I have nothing, therefore, to say to your *mourning apparel*. I concede your perfect right to be just as lachrymose over my poor deluded self as you please, and to cover yourself all over with black crape if you choose. But I *have* something to say of the manner you have treated Swedenborg, and the heavenly doctrines revealed through him, in your comments upon my communication about the 'Spirit Manifestations.'

"Let me state in the outset, that, in my communication upon which you commented to the tune of four full columns, I have not appeared as the 'advocate' of any 'doctrine,' or the defender of any particular theory touching the modern 'manifestations.' I have presented myself before your readers simply as a *chronicler of facts*, nothing more nor less. I did not attempt to speculate or philosophize on these facts; and I was entirely willing that you and your readers should draw from them whatever inferences you thought proper, explain them in any way most agreeable to yourselves. That they were *strange* facts, a very curious class of phenomena, which I witnessed, and a record of which I sent you, is not denied; but am I to be blamed for that? Am I to blame for *recording* the facts as an honest and faithful witness, and giving them to the public, allowing every one to draw his own conclusions? If not, then why were you made so very sad by that communication? Why were you so reluctant to let your readers see my statement of facts? Was it really because you were unwilling to have them see how so respectable an individual as Mr. Barrett had been deceived and befooled by spirits? I half suspect it was because *my facts*, particularly that most stubborn one of all about the broken bottle, conflicted with your darling and long-cherished theory, and indeed upset it completely. I *know* that these

facts disclosed the fallacy of your theory: but I supposed that you would feel about the matter just as I did; that you would prefer to have your readers know the *truth*, rather than rest on a false theory, however dear that theory might be to yourself. It was this consideration *alone*, the simple desire to have your readers know the truth, that induced me to record and send you the facts I did. And I now repeat, I not only *think* those facts, as *objective realities*, occurred in every essential particular as I related, but I know it, just as I know any other facts which I have learned through the sentient faculties. There were a hundred little things that occurred in that 'spirit hall' at Buffalo, which could not well be put on paper, but which, when witnessed by a cool and careful observer, and when taken all together, were of such character as to enable me to say, with our high authority, 'I am able to testify with the most solemn oath that can be offered' that these things occurred as *outward objective realities* substantially as I have related.

"Suppose Swedenborg *had* taught (as you would have your readers believe) that such things as those related in my communication could not take place under any circumstance whatever. What then?

"Am I to assume his infallibility, and then, after this unwarrantable presumption of my own, refuse to *look at facts*, or to *credit the report of my senses*, when such reports or facts seem to be in conflict with his teachings? Much as I honor Swedenborg, — and I yield to no one in my respect for him and his teachings, — I feel that I should be paying him but a sorry compliment indeed, were I to allow any thing he has taught to make me deny or reject demonstrated facts, or the combined testimony of three of my senses.

"Suppose he had declared that intelligence could not be communicated by means of electricity, nor ships propelled by means of steam: must I, then, refuse to believe in

Morse's telegraph, or the power of the steam-engine? Though receiving intelligence every week by the telegraph, and hearing the click of the machines, and though often a traveller on the steamboat and rail-car, must I believe that this is all a delusion? that words are not really spelt out by lightning, nor boats moved by steam? Swedenborg is the very last man to require or command any such abject surrender of our understanding and common sense to his dictum; and he is the last man who would feel honored by such ignoble surrender. Therefore, I cannot help feeling that you have (unintentionally, no doubt) done him very great injustice in the manner in which you have presented him to your readers in your comments upon my communication.

“But, as a matter of fact, Swedenborg has not taught (as you would have your readers believe) that spirits cannot, under any circumstances, operate directly upon material objects, or do such things as those related in my communication. That they cannot and do not, ordinarily, is conceded; but, if he has so taught, will you be kind enough to refer me to the passage, to one solitary passage? In your comments, you have quoted not less than nineteen extracts from his writings, by way of showing, that, according to the teaching of this high authority, I must have been biologized when in ‘Davenport Hall,’ or that the things I there witnessed did not occur as ultimate facts, but that they were mere illusions produced by spirits. Now, I affirm that no one of the extracts you have cited has any bearing whatever upon the phenomena which I witnessed. Not one of them goes to prove that I must have been biologized, or in any peculiar psychological condition; or that the things I witnessed did not actually occur as they seemed to occur; or that E. S. pronounced such things impossible under any circumstances. You may think this a bold and sweeping declaration; but I am willing to stake what little

reputation I may have for common sense, logical acumen, and a knowledge of the heavenly doctrines, on the truth of it. I appeal to all your readers, and ask them to read with *care* my communication, and then your nineteen extracts from Swedenborg in the connection in which they stand in his writings, and say whether my assertion be not strictly true.

“The extract which comes nearest to serving your purpose, or to being applicable in the way of showing that the things I witnessed in Buffalo were, as you believe, ‘simply fantasies induced upon my mind,’ is the one quoted near the bottom of your second column of comments from ‘A. C.’ No. 1,967. (In the citing of this passage, you have referred thus: ‘No. —,’ the particular work and number being omitted, doubtless by mistake.)

“In the passage, Swedenborg says, —

“‘There are spirits who induce such appearances by fantasies, that they seem as if they were real. For example: if any thing is seen in the shade, or by moonlight, or even in open day, if the object be in a dark place, those spirits keep the mind of the beholder fixedly and unceasingly in the thought of some particular thing, either of an animal or a monster, or a forest, or something; and, so long as the mind is kept in this thought, the fantasy is increased, and that to such a degree, that the person is persuaded, and sees, just as if the things were really there; when, nevertheless, they are nothing but illusions.’

“And here you have stopped quoting, without informing your readers where you can find this passage, stopped in the middle of a paragraph, as it stands in the ‘Arcana.’ The balance of the paragraph, doubtless, seemed to you not worth citing; but to me it seems rather important. Hear it:—

“‘Such occurrences take place with those who indulge much in fantasies, and are of weak minds, and hence are rendered credulous. Such are visionaries.’

“Surely, Mr. Editor, you would not cast me into such a category as this? If any one else were to charge me with being a ‘visionary,’ excessively ‘credulous,’ inclined ‘to indulge much in fantasies,’ I should certainly expect that you would take up the cudgel in my defence. I know that you would; though you might not be willing to go quite so far to defend me against the charge of being one ‘of weak mind.’ Whatever other sins have been laid to my charge, I am not aware that even my worst enemies have charged me with belonging to the class of individuals, with whom E. S. says, ‘Such occurrences take place.’ If, then, you do *not* consider me one of that class, don’t you see that this No. 1,967 ‘A. C.’ is inapplicable to the case in hand? don’t apply to the phenomena I mentioned at all? Or if, perchance, I should be set down as ‘visionary,’ ‘credulous,’ of ‘weak mind,’ ‘given to indulging much in fantasies,’ &c., I will then bring you the testimony of others, who witnessed precisely the same things that I did, *some* of whom, I am certain, you would not think of classing with the individuals here referred to by our author.

“Besides, it is here said that those spirits keep the mind of the beholder fixedly and unceasingly in the thought of some particular thing, either of an animal, or a monster, or a forest, or some such thing, just as *biologizers* treat their subjects. But this was not the case with me. In the large majority of instances, my mind was not previously fixed at all upon what the spirit did; often something very different. When I requested him to take off my hat, I had no thought whatever of his passing the trumpet over my shoulder, and knocking it off with that in the manner he did. When he lifted me clear from the floor, in my chair, and let me down again, not over gently, I was expecting and thinking of nothing of the sort. When the bottle was placed in a remote corner of the room, and the spirit was requested to break it, I did think, from what I had witnessed, that he

would break it there. But, contrary to my expectation, he said he could not, had not influence enough; it was too far from the mediums. And, when he did break the bottle, I was thinking and expecting he would take it up, and strike it against the table: a method entirely different from the one he did pursue. And so in a hundred other instances; showing that the phenomena I witnessed had no relation whatever to the 'fantasies' of which E. S. is speaking in 'A. C.' 1,967; that I had the evidence not only of sight, for some of the phenomena transpired in the light, but of hearing and feeling also. And when bright daylight was admitted, after certain experiments which were performed in the dark, the sense of sight then, in every instance, confirmed the report of every other sense, showing that there was no illusion, no 'fantasy,' such as E. S. is here speaking of.

"Then what have your first six extracts from E. S. to do with this question? How do they show that the things I witnessed were not really done, or that they were not 'objective realities,' but 'fantasies,' induced upon the minds of the witnesses? Pray, Mr. Editor, will you tell us how, or will any of your readers tell us? Here are the references: 'A. C.' 994, 4,622, 5,119, 5,779, 6,181; and here are two of the shortest of the extracts, which we give as specimens:—

"'It is not the body which sees, hears, smells, and feels, but the spirit.'

"'External sight exists from interior sight, and this from a sight still more interior, and so forth: the case is similar with every other sense.'

"*Ergo*, what I saw, heard, and felt in 'Davenport's Hall' were not objective realities, but mere fantasies. This is a kind of New Church logic which is ahead of me, I confess. I do not suppose you mean to advocate Bishop Berkeley's theory; if you do, pray tell us of it, that we may understand precisely what the issue is. But, if you admit the

existence of an outward world of matter, then pray tell me why the first six extracts you have quoted from Swedenborg do not prove, just as conclusively, that the table I sit at, the pen I hold, the paper I see, or the music I hear in my parlor, are mere 'fantasies,' as that those things were fantasies which I heard, felt, and saw when in Buffalo. I am really so dull, that I cannot see why your extracts do not teach that our senses are never worthy of any reliance; just as much as they teach that 'no reliance whatever could be placed upon the testimony of my natural senses,' when I was in 'Davenport's Hall.' And so with every one of your extracts. I declare, before all the readers of 'The Herald,' that not one of them affords even a shadow of support to your *theory*, in the face of my facts. If any of your readers doubt my assertion, let them carefully read for themselves all the passages cited. Here are the references, in addition to those already given: 'A. C.' 6,205, 4,263, 5,084, 1,880, 4,632, 5,849, 1,635, 1,637, 1,703.

"Then, after having marshalled this array of totally irrelevant extracts, you very coolly proceed: 'If the voices, the musical sounds, the ringing of bells, and the various other impressions, were made upon Mr. Barrett's mind by the spirits; if these impressions, we say, were made directly upon his spiritual senses, and not upon his ultimate and natural senses, as we think we have clearly shown, from the testimony of Swedenborg, must have been the case [a whole platoon of exclamation marks ought to be put here], — then this conclusion is a fair and irresistible one: he was, while in that hall, and while associated with those mediums, in such a state that no reliance whatever could be placed upon the testimony of his natural senses.' I declare I cannot fathom such logic as this is. I give it up; simply remarking, Mr. Editor, that if you will allow me to reason in the same way that you have, and use quotations from Swedenborg in the same way, I will undertake to



demonstrate that you can ride to the moon on the tip-ends of the plumes of a bird of paradise in forty minutes, or that you have actually ridden there and back again, already, a hundred times, in that way; and your readers shall decide whether my demonstration be not as complete as yours, in the case before us.

“But I have written enough for one sitting. You shall have the balance of what I wish to say, next week; when I promise to show that the possibility of the occurrence as objective realities of phenomena, like those described in my communication of Dec. 6, is clearly recognized by Scripture, by Swedenborg, and by intelligent receivers of the heavenly doctrines in this country and in England; and not only so, but to show that there is not one line anywhere in Swedenborg to sustain your biological theory in the face of the statements in my communication of the 6th ult., admitting, as I understand you admit, that those statements were sincerely and honestly made.”

Let us return to the Davenports, whom we have left for a brief space, but have not deserted.

It will be perceived, that the testimony which is given here by persons not professedly spiritualists is of a nature only to add force to the hypothesis of the spiritual origin of the phenomena developed through the Davenport mediums, and that some interesting facts are here stated which differ from any previously given. The following is from “The New-York Sunday Dispatch:” —

“From two to six o’clock, last Sunday afternoon, we were at the rooms of the Davenport family, at 195 Bowery, in company with sixteen other members of the press. None others were admitted; and we were all present by special invitation extended to the press, to test the so-called ‘spiritual manifestations,’ which we did to the best of our ability. We propose here to briefly state what was done by the ‘invisible powers,’ and by ourselves.

“A common extension-table, which we all examined, was drawn out; and nine of us, besides the mediums, were seated round it. A small opening was made at the window, by drawing aside the curtain, which gave us a dim twilight, so that we could distinctly see each other, and detect the slightest motion of any of our number.

“A guitar, a banjo, a tambourine, a bell, a violin, and a trumpet, were placed under the table, against which we all sat, so as to touch the chest. We all took hold of hands, resting them on the table; drew our feet under our chairs, as did the mediums; and then touched our knees together all round, so that we could detect any motion of our neighbors' legs on either side. It will be seen there were four of our number thus in contact with the two boy-mediums, at the hands and at the knees. One end of the table was left vacant; that is, no one sat at it. We were cautioned to keep silence, when all the rest retired from the room at the usual entrance; and, we add, that all of us, previous to sitting down, carefully examined the room, saw that the doors were bolted, the windows secured, and that there were no traps or trappings, nor any one concealed in it.

“Soon, a slight vibration of the guitar or banjo was heard; then a kind of rattling, and a sound resembling the drawing of something along the floor by a rat. These gradually grew louder and more frequent, till the bell began to ring, and nearly or quite all the instruments seemed to be in motion. We distinctly heard the keys snap, and the strings vibrate, as if some one was tuning them up. The tambourine was shook and beaten, the trumpet danced, and the instruments thumped against the table and the knees of the company.

“Then the guitar was repeatedly poked out from under the vacant end of the table, so that half of the body was distinctly visible to all. This was done repeatedly; and the gentleman sitting nearest to it took hold of it, when it

was drawn back with a force, which, he said, made it difficult for him to retain his hold. The necks of the stringed instruments were poked up in sight, between the different members of the company; and we, personally, as well as others, put our hand under the table, and had different instruments placed in it. Raps, of a peculiar sound, were heard on the table, at various times; and by means of these and the alphabet, many questions asked by the company and the mediums were answered. After thus satisfying ourselves that none of these things were performed by the physical power of the mediums, nor of any of the company, we broke the circle, and prepared for a dark sitting. We examined the carpet under the table, but could discover no cut in it, nor any indication of a trap-door. There was no machinery, nor any indication of machinery, about the table.

“For the dark circle, all the leaves of the table, but one, which was left in the centre, were taken out. It was then closed up, shoved into the centre of the room, and the two boys seated at it, facing each other. We had our choice,—to lock Mr. Davenport and friend out of the room, leaving us alone with the boys, or to keep them in, and place guard over them. Preferring to know where they were, we kept them in the room, and took turns, two by two, in holding them when the light was extinguished; often making them speak, so that all might know they were safe in their places.

“Before the light was extinguished, the strings were observed to be pulled out of one of two guitars lying on the table. Having taken a fair survey of every thing, we all took our seats back against the wall, some on each side of the room, and took hold of hands, so that no one could get up and play tricks, without the concurrence of those sitting on his right and left. We did this, not because we doubted the honesty of any of our own number, but to make ourselves positively sure, as far as possible. The light was

then turned off. Soon the instruments were sounded, the bell rang, &c.

“We also heard what we all conceived to be the stringing-up and tuning of the guitar. A light was called for by means of the alphabet; and, on examination, we found, that, amidst the ‘blackness of darkness’ which filled the room, the guitar had absolutely been strung up within the space of not over one or two minutes, a thing which any one will find difficult to perform, if he will make the experiment.

“It was then proposed that two of our number sit at the table, and hold the boys. This was agreed to; and two sat facing each other, on either side of the boys, each holding a hand of each boy, and each placing a foot on one of the feet of each of the boys. The instruments were piled up in the centre of the table, to suit our own taste; when we again took our seats as before, and the lights were extinguished.

“The manifestations were the same, though less powerful. Those holding the boys said they were repeatedly touched by the instruments, some of which were struck; every thing was found in the state of confusion indicated by the previous noise. Our friends who held the boys repelled with indignation the charge of collusion.

“After all had had a turn at the table, the question was raised, ‘Are we all humbugs, or are we all psychologized?’ The question was undecided; but no one was found to argue the affirmative of either horn. One, however, was not quite satisfied; and the ‘presiding spirit,’ who gives his name as ‘John King,’ spoke through the trumpet, and wanted any one who was not satisfied to say ‘Ay.’ The ‘ay’ was repeated; and the invisible ‘John’ said, if all would leave the room, and let the gentleman sit alone with the boys, he would convince him. The room was cleared, a sentinel (the gentleman’s father) sat at the door: we personally

piled the instruments on the opposite side of the table from the gentleman, so that the boys could not reach them without his knowing it, then turned off the gas, and retired to the entry. Then we called the names of Davenport and friend, and both responded. Meanwhile, the performance was heard going on inside. Pretty soon, there was a terrible racket, and a cry for light. The door was opened, and a light struck, when the gentleman was discovered crawling out from under the table. He was convinced. He said the instruments were all piled up against him, and then the table pushed against him, upsetting him; he dragging the boys after him.

“This was the close of the performance. But before this, and after holding the boys all round, we tried the experiment of tying them.

“Two or three clothes-lines were produced, which were wound around the boys’ bodies, arms, and legs, and through the chair, knots being tied at almost every turn, till all (boys, chair, and table) were considered securely fastened together. Then the boys’ hands were tied together with handkerchiefs. Davenport and friend were secured as before; we all took our seats, holding on to each other’s hands; and the light was turned off. Instantly, the manifestations commenced, more animatedly than ever. The tambourine was beaten vigorously, the bell clattered, and the stringed instruments, which appeared to fly about the room, twanged. It was a perfect confusion of discordant sounds, to say the least.

“At this point, the alphabet was called for, when was spelled out, ‘Own up!’ The man owned up. What was done? The invisible ‘John’ said through the trumpet, in his peculiar voice, ‘I rapped him.’ That was acknowledged true, and we all had a hearty laugh. A light was struck; and it was proposed that the invisible powers untie the handkerchiefs on the boys’ hands (which, on inspection,

had been found satisfactory), and return the same to their owners. The light was turned off, when, instantly, the boys sang out they were free, and the owners said they had received their handkerchiefs, which, on striking a light, were found tied in knots, evidently to enable them to be thrown as they were.

“It was then proposed that the invisible ‘John’ untie the cords. This was done in short order, after the light was extinguished, the cords fairly whistling, they were drawn through the chairs with such velocity; the boys, all the while, cautioning the ‘spirits’ to be careful, as they hurt them with the ends of the cords. In about a minute, the boys were free. It was generally conceded that it would have taken ten or fifteen minutes for a man to untie either of the boys by daylight, they were so bound up, and the cords were so knotted.

“In conclusion, a paper containing a general statement of the foregoing facts, and avowing that no one was in any way detected as being the agent of the ‘manifestations,’ in the ordinary sense of the term, was signed by a majority of the company; a portion having left before it was drawn up. They said they could not wait, but would sign such a paper as proposed at any future time.”

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## CHAPTER XI.

LET us now inquire *how spirits act on matter*; for that, after all, is the main question in a great many minds.

Rev. William Fishbough, an eminent thinker, writes in a New-York paper as follows. The article is very suggestive; we present it on its own merits. The views are those of a great scholar and a good man.

“‘How do spirits operate on dead matter? How do they break over this discrete degree? Can you tell me in a few words?’

“The above question was recently propounded to us, in a private letter, by an intelligent Swedenborgian clergyman. It was intended to elicit an answer through a private epistle; but as it is one that is frequently asked, and involves in its elucidation principles which are of importance to the general mind, we have concluded to offer our thought upon it through the instrumentality of these pages.

“It is important to bear in mind that spirit is, at one point, necessarily and intimately allied to matter, notwithstanding the discrete degree which separates the two when each is contemplated by itself.

“This, indeed, is manifest by their association and reciprocal action upon each other in the human body. All things of the body answer, by correspondence, to all things in the soul, and *vice versâ*; and between each particular faculty or principle of the soul, and its corresponding organ, fibre, or atom of body, there must necessarily be a point of contact, in order that the physical organism may be moved, and made the instrument of action upon bodies in the external world.

“This will readily be comprehended by the receivers of the doctrines of Swedenborg, who, in his posthumous tracts, teaches that the most refined essence of the blood, namely, the animal spirit, connects with the lower substance of the soul, and serves as a medium through which the soul acts upon the body. But Swedenborg also teaches, and correctly, we think, that this whole physical world is one grand body, while the whole spiritual world is one grand soul; and that, as the soul and body in the individual man connect, and mutually act upon each other, through the most refined essence of the blood, so the whole material and

spiritual worlds connect and mutually act upon each other through the most refined essence of nature.

“But if this is true in a general, it must also be true in a particular sense, inasmuch as generals can only be made up of particulars; and, by way of more definitely explaining the *modus* of particular physical manifestations by spirits, now occurring, the following additional remarks are submitted:—

“It is universally admitted by physiologists, that the human blood contains, in solution, all the materials of the physical body. Now, the blood in its most refined state (the state in which, under the name of the animal spirit, it circulates through the cortical fibres and nerves, and serves, according to Swedenborg, as the medium of the soul’s connection with the body) is still essentially the blood, though ascended and purified; and hence it still contains, in ultimate refinement, every element of which the human body is composed.

“But the human body, and hence the blood, and hence, in greater refinement, even the animal spirit, contains no material but what is contained in and was received from the outer world, and which, in being taken into the system and digested, and in passing successively into chyme, blood, fibre, and animal spirit, is only changed in respect to its potential and living conditions, and not in respect to its abstract material properties; which latter remain the same, as carbon, nitrogen, hydrogen, &c. It is, moreover, known that the blood, and thence the solids of the body, contain most of the elements constituting outer nature; and it is presumed, on good grounds, that it contains all of them. It follows, therefore, that in the animal spirit, or refined essence of the blood, the soul, the *spirit*, does come in direct contact with most, if not all the materials, the carbon, nitrogen, hydrogen, calcium, iron, &c., which compose the outer and physical world, thus with the whole epitomized,



physical world itself, and this, too, notwithstanding the discrete degree which separates the two from each other.

“Now, admitting the soul to be immortal, it must be immortal in all its parts, faculties, properties, loves, and relations. Hence no relation which the soul is known to sustain with matter in the body can ever be absolutely lost. It is true, the soul may experience changes of state; may pass into more and still more interior conditions, which proportionally remove it from contact, for the time being, with external matter: but still, under suitable circumstances, its former exterior states may be more or less perfectly resumed, in a manner analogous to that in which we resume, through memory, the states of affection and thought, and dwell in the same scenes which have marked some period of our past life.

“When the soul is connected with the body, it is in what we call the external state, that is, in the state of the external senses. When abnormalized, or disconnected from the body, by death of the latter, it is in the spiritual state, or in the exercise of the spiritual senses. In this state, a discrete degree removed from the previous one, it cannot know or act upon the material existences of the outer world, which are, as it were, nonentities to it. But as the soul while connected with the body may be abnormalized, and thrown into the interior, by magnetic and other processes, so the soul disembodied may, as it is reasonable to believe, by a reverse process of abnormalization, be externalized, brought again into intimate *rapport* with the matter of the outer world, and come again into the life of its external senses and powers. If this process of externalization is perfect, the soul, or living man, will actually appear to us in bodily form. Ceasing, for the time, to be what is distinctly called a spirit, it becomes an external man again, and as such can move matter with its hands, in the same manner with any other external man. Many well-authenticated phenomena

of this kind are on record, and occur mostly in the histories of 'haunted houses.'

"But as it is seldom possible for the man of this world to fully enter the spiritual state, so it is seldom possible, even under the most favorable conditions, for spirits of the other world to fully resume the external state; and the partial success of their efforts to do this is sometimes manifested in the projection of a visible or tangible hand, foot, or other organ, while the other portions of the organism remain invisible. This phenomenon is of common occurrence in the presence of certain mediums, whose spheres, partaking both of the spiritual and physical, serve as a link of connection through which spirits can partially re-enter the outer world.

"In most instances, however, the spirit is unable to externalize itself to the extent of visibility, but still can do this so far as to be able to perceive and form volitional and what may be called magnetic connections with external objects, such as chairs, tables, &c., which it may move, or cause to emit concussive sounds, by an effort of will, or an exertion of its partially externalized, but still invisible spiritual organs.

"We admit that this theory would probably appear fanciful to most minds, did it rest exclusively upon *à priori* ground; but, as the facts which it is intended to explain absolutely do exist, we submit it to reflecting minds as the most rational hypothesis of which we, in our present light, are able to conceive. We are willing to abandon it when a better one is offered.

"Before dismissing the subject, we will be a little more specific upon a certain point involved in the foregoing. It is our opinion (of which we have not time now to exhibit the proofs) that the soul is not only a substantial organic entity, but contains really as much substance as the physical body itself, preserving the exact (spiritual) form of the latter. The only reason why we do not see souls or spirits

as we do men in the flesh is because the organized substance of the former is in an interior state, and hence only *en rapport* with interior senses; but if that same identical, organized substance can be externalized, and thus simply brought into *rapport* with the external senses, it will necessarily be visible and tangible to men in the flesh, and will exhibit all the properties of any other external human organism, supposing, of course, that the process of externalization is complete. I cannot, therefore, agree with many spiritualists that it is necessary for a spirit to seize hold of, and condense, and clothe itself with, the particles floating in our atmosphere, in order to make itself visible and tangible, though I am not prepared to deny that spirits can do this to some extent if they wish.”

Let us turn awhile from philosophy to fact.

At a circle held in the rooms, “King” told Ira and his brother William that thenceforth they twain were to go together, sit, travel, and, if need be, suffer together, for the great cause to which their lives had now for some years been consecrated.

He foreshowed their career for years, the lapse of time fully demonstrating “King’s” power of foreknowing, and demonstrating that this rare being was, notwithstanding his occasional trifling and jocularly, not only a *good* but a great soul; and that he was a wise one is proved by his constantly resorting to the identical methods best adapted of all others to the company present at his circles, for convincing purposes. He realized Paul’s advice, “to be all things to all men;” and, as was said in a former chapter, he probably has convinced more people of their own immortality than any twenty men, dead or alive, that ever lived, since time began, up to 1869.

He explained to the brothers and their father that he now proposed something new in the shape of physical demonstrations of man’s deathlessness; for he was weary of con-

vincing hundreds, and aspired to do the same service to thousands at a time, which he thought might be done if a plan of his could be put in thorough operation.

He said he wanted a box, or cabinet, made for his uses, after a plan and model that he, after much study, thought he had now matured. This cabinet was to be of hard, solid, but thin wood; but, as it would take considerable time to make it, he suggested that Davenport should meantime exercise his ingenuity in manufacturing as perfect a substitute for his idea as possible; but he stipulated, that whatever arrangement he got up should have an orifice near its upper edge, or end, through which he proposed to thrust, so that thousands might see it, his arm in the light.

This idea took amazingly with the Davenport boys, or young men, rather; for their beards had by this time so developed as to entitle them to be called boys no longer; besides which, they both had reached an age when they were perfectly aware that they had hearts, and susceptible hearts they were.

Next day, therefore, Mr. Davenport procured what he described to the writer as a "music-box," a rather indefinite definition. It had four sides and a top, but no bottom, and was four feet wide by two in depth. In one of the sides, near the "roof," he cut a hole about a foot square; and over that hole he nailed a curtain by its upper edge, so that the flap hung free and plumb over the hole.

Night came, and Ira was firmly tied in a chair; and three men lifted this box, and put it over him: but the poor fellow did not like or appreciate the position, because it was another "first time," perhaps. Judging by the symptoms, he was frightened; for he made as much noise and "fuss" as if he was being badly hurt, if not worse. Upon being interrogated by the outsiders as to "what was up," he declared in piteous accents that there was a man in that box along with him, a great deal bigger than himself or any one else in the room.

Now, if the Davenport brothers were remarkable for one moral trait more than another, it was their unswerving rectitude of either statement or intention. Doubtless, when a man's hands are tied, and he finds himself in a tight place, he may see things swelling out beyond their true proportions: hence Ira may have unconsciously exaggerated the bulk of his *co-boxee*; but it was nevertheless most undoubtedly true that some one really was therein beside himself; for the thing was palpably, tangibly demonstrated within two minutes after the young man's outcry.

A long, cadaverous, ghostly, sepulchral-looking hand and arm was thrust from eternity into time through that little hole in that music-box. There was no mistake about the matter. *That arm was there*, palpably, visibly (for the gas was brightly burning), tangibly there, right before the face and eyes of six and forty men and women. "It was Ira's arm, perhaps," objects some skeptical reader. Nonsense! Ira was a boy; and that arm was the limb of a man fifty years old, with a hand and fingers at the end of it four times as large as his own.

This was the inauguration of a series of similar displays of supra-mortal power, that has since that night been witnessed by quite two millions of people in our own land and Europe; and to produce it required a knowledge of chemistry and electro-dynamics, on the part of the power behind the scene, compared to which that of Liebig or Nichols sinks into utter insignificance. The world never witnessed a rarer sight since the day wherein the fingers of a man's hand came out, and wrote, "Mene, Mene, Tekel Upharsin," upon the walls of Belshazzar's palace in Nineveh; and even that wondrous display pales before the one whereof we are writing.

O Ira Davenport! this world knows not yet a tithe of your priceless value to mankind. It will not fully know it, or you, until life's fitful fever is over, and you and your

biographer also have gone home to the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. But you are doing your work. The world will know you then; and your monument shall be of materials more enduring than granite; for it shall be built of human loves and gratitude; and your fame will eclipse that of the proudest emperor or wielder of a sceptre that ever sat upon an earthly throne, — thou and thy brother. *Salut, O twain!* And I, too, am doing my work also.

*Pulchra mater, pulchrior filia!* Beautiful mother, Britain! more beautiful daughter, America! But most beautiful to the future's eye, because thou hast produced a new demonstration of human immortality.

The manifestations on that first night were more eminently satisfactory; but not so the box from whence they came, for it was altogether too unwieldy: and therefore, like the congressman's speech, its first great effort was its last; for it was consigned to disgrace forthwith.

Next day, its materials were worked up into a larger box, and of more convenient form, both for the comfort of the media and the purposes of "King" and company. And, when night came again, two chairs were placed inside, upon which and to which Ira and William were both securely lashed. And with the improvement came improved exhibitions from its interior, the report of which went forth on that second day, and created such a stir in Buffalo and the regions round about, that an entirely new class of people, most of whom had theretofore ignored spiritism in all shapes, became interested and attracted to the circles; and consequently, when the third night came, the room was literally crammed and jammed with people long hours before the time to commence the session. Among others who came was an eminent manufacturer of agricultural implements, a resident of Buffalo, named Pitts; a man of keen perception, an astute observer, and one of liberal edu-

cation and religious sentiments; a Universalist, an honest man, and one who objected *in toto* to every thing that debases mankind and derogates from the majesty and fatherhood of the infinite God.

The same, with a few additional feats, were performed that night; but still “King” was dissatisfied with the box: indeed, he became quite disgusted with it, and said vocally, “I want and *must* have a different affair from this altogether; and, as you seem to be incompetent to construct a suitable one, if you’ll give me paper and pencils here in this miserable apology for a cabinet, I will endeavor to draw *my* design, from which, if you can execute it in wood, one can be made exactly suitable to the uses we propose to put it to. Come, let’s have the materials.”

For the next three minutes, the only sounds heard in the box were those of a pencil being rapidly dashed over a sheet of stiff, brown paper, the only material that could be furnished just then.

When the self-assigned task was over, the paper was thrust out of the aperture, and was looked at curiously by Davenport, who understood the drawings about as well as he did the original Greek. Indeed, it was all Greek to him; for, not being a mechanic, he could not comprehend the design, which had been drawn in sections, as by a master-hand. Not so, however, was it with Mr. Pitts, to whom Davenport handed the paper. *He* saw the idea, and grasped the design in an instant, and said, “It’s all right: I have it. Keep cool, Davenport, and I’ll show you that ‘King’ understands *cabinet* making better than some of our presidents. Ha, ha!” And the circle laughed heartily at the exquisite and timely pun. “I’ll take this plan home with me; and to-morrow I’ll set my men at work upon its embodiment, the result of which, a box such as ‘King’ wants, I expect to have completed, and to present to you as a free gift, before this time to-morrow night.”

Pitts was as good as his word; and, before the circle broke up, "King" told him that he should be the first man to sit in that cabinet along with the young men, which eventually was the case; and thousands have since then shared that same privilege with him: but Mr. Pitts was the first man on this continent, and probably in the whole world, that ever struck hands with a human spirit revived, so to speak, and re-incarnated for a time in what all who have touched it declare to be an exact *simulacrum* of a healthful, fleshy, solid, human substance.

When the long, spectral-looking hand was thrust through the aperture of the new cabinet, which Mr. Pitts had caused to be made during the day (and it took six men from noon till night to do it, and deliver it at the Davenport rooms), a hollow voice said, "Come, Pitts, shake hands with 'Johnny King.'" He went up, trembling, not with fear or terror, but with excessive joy. He seized the proffered hand; and so great was the good man's emotion, that he wept like a child: and no wonder, for in that hand-shaking he had physically bridged the sea of time, and had greeted a brother, actually, in eternity. It was a glorious achievement, and worth more to Pitts, or any other man, than all the glittering baubles that deck an empire's throne.

At this point, the reader naturally expects a description of the new cabinet; but that expectation will not be gratified, inasmuch as the same box will be fully described a little farther on.

. . . . .

In the autumn of 1855, Davenport received a letter from Prof. Mapes of New Jersey, to the effect that he, Mapes, was coming on to Buffalo, expressly to satisfy himself, by ocular demonstration, whether the wonders reported of the circle were real or fanciful, false or true. Davenport wrote back, saying, "Come on: every facility you require in order to a candid and fair investigation shall be accorded and



afforded you." Mapes went, saw, explored, tested, and finally gave in that the half had not been told. He was delighted with the results obtained, and from that hour in him the Davenport family had a true, firm, constant, and unswerving friend, and so he remained. That visit satisfied him completely; and it proved, eventually, to be the most important visit, both to the family and the world, that they had theretofore received, inasmuch as from that visit dates the resolution of the family to travel and display their marvels to the full, broad gaze of the world at large.

The majority of Mapes's *séances* were held in private; himself, the media, and two (specially invited) friends, alone being present: and he very wisely refrained from dictating specific tests as to what the power should or should not do, in which he departed widely from the usual course pursued by investigators; the consequence being, that tests of all sorts were given in the most prodigal profusion; for, when "King" observed his generous spirit, he told him he thought he could give him all the evidence he required before he left, and redeemed his implied promise to the complete satisfaction of everybody. Mapes requested "King" to lift Ira to the ceiling, and afford the youth an opportunity to write certain words thereon; which was done almost as soon as the request was made.

One thing more he asked, which was, that he, for a short time, might be left alone with the media. It was granted, and all others immediately vacated the apartment; whereupon, he took the four hands of the young men, and held them tightly in his own, and, while so doing, all the instruments flew about the room in fine style.

This complete and satisfactory test being over, the professor held a conversation of half an hour's length with "King," on the subject of chemistry; and "King" clearly demonstrated the superiority of his knowledge and acquirements in that line of research, compared with that of his

questioner, whose rank is high in that, the peculiar study of a lifetime then something over half a century long.

The professor left Buffalo, after a pressing invitation to the family to visit the Island City professionally; nor would he take "no" for an answer. Indeed, no sooner had he reached New York than he not only spread the news of what himself had witnessed, but he announced the speedy advent of the wonderful brothers in the American metropolis.

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## CHAPTER XII.

As the manifesting power sanctioned and advised the projected journey, Davenport settled his affairs, and accepted several invitations to exhibit the phenomena on the route; "King," in every instance, selecting what places they should stop at, and for what length of time.

Omitting all mention of what occurred in Troy, and other *villages* on the route, we will proceed at once to describe what took place in New York.

When they reached the city, the greatest excitement ensued, and hundreds of people ran wild with anxiety to see these marvellous young *Thaumaturgii*. A hall, 195 Bowery, was engaged and fitted up, Davenport arranging to supervise the circles, while he employed a business-agent to transact the outside and financial affairs.

While preparations for their appearance were being made in New York, Prof. Mapes invited the family to visit his residence in Newark, N.J., which they accepted, albeit not quite sure that it would be possible for spirits to manifest outside the limits of the United States,—Jersey considering herself a separate empire, under the rule of

railroad-ocracy, — and it was questioned whether the “company” would permit even an angel’s visit or transit without a heavy toll. However, the family went; and, with the exception of what took place in its presence, the writer never heard of any thing spiritual or heavenly occurring within the limits of that special-wealth. So much for Jersey.

On the Monday following the Saturday of this visit, the family (that is Davenport and his sons) were to open in New York, where Mr. —, their agent, and who was to receive a percentage of all accruing profits (for they were poor, and, to meet expenses and maintain themselves, were compelled to collect a trifling fee from their visitors), was making all needful arrangements in their behoof.

They reached Newark without accident, or having to pay toll; and when evening set in, the professor invited them and his guests into the parlors, two in number, with folding-doors between. To the lintels of these doors, Mapes had suspended a snare-drum, beyond reach of any save one who stood upon a chair. The drumsticks and other instruments were placed upon a table, at which table sat the media, in the rear parlor. In the front parlor sat the professor and his two daughters, with others; in the other, near the brothers, sat his wife. All being ready, the word was given, and out went the lights, and away went the instruments all over the rooms, thrumming, thumping, squalling, as if they were just let loose from long confinement, and were bound to make amends for lost exercise; and all this was accompanied with a regular rat-tat-tan-tarrar on the drum; genuine quadruple bob-majors, in triple quick time. But the most curious thing about it was, that the drumsticks not only thumped upon the drum heartily, but alternated on Mapes’s head, gently, softly, and discreetly, so as not to injure his cranium, or unduly disturb the brains inside. The alternations were as rapid as lightning itself, leaving not

even space enough between the separate thumps to afford room for the consideration of the very slightest personal equation, or the difference between two men's perception of the same external fact, internally perceived, and externally expressed by motion, word, or sign.

Said Mapes, "'King,' can you play on the piano? if so, will you oblige by so doing?"

"King" responded affirmatively; and forthwith the piano was heard discoursing most exquisite melody. While in the midst of a tune, lights were called for; and Mapes and his daughter Sophia rose from their seats, retired to a corner, and began to converse most earnestly in whispers, the media and company still remaining as they were; but what that private talk was about none but the talkers knew, and they forbore to inform the others.

Lights out again, "King" spoke, directed the whispering lady to sit at the table with Ira and William, everybody else to quit the room; which was instantly complied with, not a demurrer being put in.

Before they left the room, however, the lady took care to place her feet on those of the brothers, and took their four hands in her own, and held them firmly until the company again returned to the parlor.

All being arranged, the professor extinguished the gas, and, conducting the company out of the rooms by the light of a hand-lamp, stationed himself on the outside of the parlor and entry door, and quietly awaited results.

For fifteen minutes, the strangest noises and goings-on were heard in the parlors. Presently, the lady called for lights, which being brought, she and her father again held a whispering conference together, the import, purport, and result of which remained in their own bosoms; for they preserved the most unqualified and provoking reticence upon the subject.

But father and daughter were, undoubtedly, to some

considerable extent, under the same impression as the writer of the subjoined article, published in a Buffalo newspaper; and they were resolved, if possible, to reach a solution of these doubts about the *manifestations through the Davenport's*, and settle it, as did J. W. L., who says, —

“As there is some diversity of opinion as to the genuineness of the manifestations made through the Davenport mediums, I resolved to satisfy myself upon the question. I have been present at two circles at Mr. Davenport's room in Buffalo, and at both have had undoubted evidence of spirit presence and power. The room is twenty-seven feet long by sixteen wide, plainly furnished. A table of oval form, seven feet long and five feet wide, stood in the centre of the room. Under it lay a banjo, guitar, violin, tambourine, speaking-trumpet, and a bell. We sat close to the table. It was proposed that the mediums should be seated in such a position, that persons on each side of them could place their feet in contact with theirs. After we were all thus seated, a slight vibration of the guitar was heard, followed by a momentary clashing of the instruments under the table. The bell was rung violently; the banjo was poked up from under the table, at the same time being played upon; the violin was placed in my lap; I put my hand under the table, and requested the spirit, who gives his name as ‘John King,’ to shake hands with me. He grasped my hands so powerfully as to make me beg for mercy. Many other convincing manifestations were made by the spirits. These manifestations were made with sufficient light to enable us to distinguish easily every object in the room. In the evening there were but a few present. Mr. Davenport proposed to try some experiments. A circular table, four feet in diameter, was placed in the centre of the room. The instruments were put upon the table; the company and mediums joined hands around the room. The invisible power directed us to tie the mediums in any posi-

tion we desired. We placed the instruments on the floor; the mediums took their seats about three feet from the instruments. We then procured two bed-cords, with which to secure the mediums. It took some half an hour to tie them. The company then examined them, and all satisfied themselves that they were firmly secured, and could not move to produce the manifestations. The lights were then extinguished; the company all joined hands: soon the instruments began to fly around the room with amazing rapidity. By mental request, I was touched on different parts of my person by various articles in their aerial flights. The alphabet was called for by the raps; and the words, 'I want the fiddlesticks,' were spelled out. The fiddlesticks were put upon the table; the violin passed rapidly around the room, tunes being played upon it. At the same time, lights were exhibited: the exhibition was very beautiful. The lights filled every part of the room. After this, the spirits called for the lights, and the mediums remained in the same position, tied in their chairs. I am willing to testify that those mediums had no hand or part in producing the manifestations.

J. W. L."

In pursuance of the dominant idea, that (possibly from circumstances that had occurred, presently to be explained) the media were given to the perpetration of practical jokes, next day the professor, accidentally, of course, procured some packs of cards to amuse them with, ostensibly, but in reality to discover how well posted they were in tricks and conjurations therewith, deeming it morally certain, that, if they were experts in one sort of ambi-dexterity and legerdemain, there was no good reason to suppose them innocent of another sort as well.

The professor was sharper than J. W. L., but he lost his labor that time; for not only were they ignorant of the cards, but made such bungling work in trying to imitate the simple tricks he showed them that he gave up in

sheer despair. It was clear they were not cut out for card-players.

At length the wished-for Monday arrived ; and the youths were to sit for a select company of eighty, the majority of whom were spiritualists on the *qui vive* for trickery, and sharp-set to detect it, albeit they manifested a very fair spirit of candor.

At two o'clock in the day, Mapes called the meeting to order. The circle was arranged, the media were seated, the lights were extinguished, and "King," speaking through a trumpet, asked Mapes what he wanted. "I want a test."

"You shall have it. Davenport, a rope."

The professor said he'd get a rope, which he did, and then lashed the young men firmly to a couple of arm-chairs with two stout bed-cords ; occupying nearly an hour in the process. Having tied them to his heart's content, he then measured off twenty feet from the table, and took his seat ; the lights were put out ; and "King" said, as the guitar was landed in his lap, and immediately carried back to the table, "Professor, how d'ye like that ?"

"Very well ; *but I want the lights.*"

Lights were brought ; and Mapes got up, and minutely examined every coat in the room, every hand, and every arm, muttering *sotto voce*, as he did so, "That isn't it, nor that, nor that ! *It's very strange.*" He then went to and thoroughly examined the two brothers, saying, "You may think strange of my movements ; but, when that guitar came to me, I carefully felt of what I believed to be young Ira Davenport, whom I examined from head to foot at my leisure, but whom I *could not hold*, as he, or it, slipped through my hands, or *melted* away, with apparently the utmost ease. These hands, indeed, were much larger than his hands are, and, but for that and two other circumstances, I should certainly believe it to have been him. These other circumstances are, first, Ira is still tied exactly as I tied him ; the

rope is uncut, the knots are intact: and, secondly, there's no such cloth in this room as that which I felt of. I am equally certain that Mr. Davenport is not chargeable with fraud; for he is still, I see, well guarded by two of my best friends, skeptics, too, and who held him all the while we were in darkness. These astonishing occurrences have convinced me of two new facts; and these are, first, that the invisibles really incarnate themselves from elements emanating in great part from the persons of the media; and second, that, in the majority of cases, these special incarnations are precise and exact counterparts of the medium whence the major portion of the incarnating material is derived. This is Davenport's hypothesis: I see no good reason why it may not be the true one. This is not all. Last Friday night, these mediums were at my house, and I requested the spirit to play upon the piano. The instrument was played, and, while being so, I reached forth my hand, and felt, as I thought, Ira Davenport playing it. My suspicions were aroused, and all the more vehemently from the fact that Sophia, my daughter, told me, that, during the preceding manifestations, she distinctly felt an arm encircling her neck, and thought and believed it to be Ira's. Subsequently, on the same evening, she was in the room alone with the mediums, their hands on hers, her feet on theirs, and then, even then, under the most unquestionable test conditions, the same sleeves rubbed against her, the same arm wreathed her neck, the same fingers played with her curls, and the same presence was there.

"Even this was not all; for on that night, and this day, also, under similar test conditions, I have personally handled at my leisure a perfect duplicate of young Ira Davenport, when I know, and you all know, that Ira himself was, and still is, so tightly bound in that chair, that I challenge him to get loose in forty minutes, alone and without a knife, and he may have any one of you to assist him. You now understand the meaning of our whispers."



Here was evidence not to be gainsaid. The writer has no theory to offer as to how spirits can make *cloth sleeves*. The fact is indubitable that they do make what looks and feels like wearing apparel; but *how* it is done, modesty forbids him from even attempting to explain. There's the fact; each reader can construct a theory of his own.

The inquiry is often made, Suppose that spiritualism is true; what then? *Cui bono?* The sapient (sap-heads) philosophers who propound such queries remind the writer of a story told with infinite gusto by Layard, the explorer of the ruins of Nineveh, a city built some thousands of years before "the good old days of Adam and Eve." The story is told of Imaum Ali Zade, a Turkish *cadi*. Mr. Layard, in his Oriental explorations at Nineveh and Babylon, addressed certain inquiries to this *cadi*, in reference to the commerce and antiquities of the city in which he resided. To these inquiries, the Turkish philosopher replied by the following letter. It is easy to imagine the flickering expression on the face of our conservative friends as they read this letter, not knowing at first whether to laugh at the stupidity of the Turk, or to compliment him as a pious Oriental philosopher, who has forcibly expressed his own sentiments in reference to the folly of modern science.

"MY ILLUSTRIOUS FRIEND, AND JOY OF MY LIVER, —  
The thing you ask of me is both difficult and useless. Although I have passed all my days in this place, I have neither counted the houses, nor have I inquired into the number of the inhabitants; and as to what one person loads on his mules, and the other stows away in the bottom of his ships, that is no business of mine. But, above all, as to the previous history of this city. God only knows the amount of dirt and confusion that the infidels may have eaten before the coming of the sword of Islam. It were unprofitable for us to inquire into it.

"Oh, my soul! oh, my lamb! seek not after the things which concern thee not. Thou camest unto us, and we welcomed thee; go in peace.

"Of a truth, thou hast spoken many words, and there is no harm done; for the speaker is one, and the listener another. After the fashion of thy people, thou hast wandered from one place to another, until thou art happy and contented in none. We, praise be to God, were born here, and never desire to quit it. Is it possible, then, that the idea of a general intercourse between mankind should make any impression on our understandings? God forbid!

"Listen, oh, my son! there is no wisdom equal to the belief in God. He created the world; and shall we liken ourselves unto him in seeking to penetrate into the mysteries of creation? Shall we say, Behold this star spinneth round that star, and this other star with a tail goeth and cometh in so many years? Let it go. He from whose hand it came will guide and direct it.

"But thou wilt say to me, Stand aside, O man! for I am more learned than thou art, and have seen more things. If thou thinkest thou art in this respect more learned than I am, thou art welcome. I praise God that I seek not that which I require not. Thou art learned in the things I care not for; and as for that which thou hast seen, I defile it. Will much knowledge create thee a double belly? or wilt thou seek paradise with thine eyes? Oh, my friend! if thou wilt be happy, say there is no God but God. Do no evil; and thus wilt thou fear neither man nor death; for surely thine hour will come. The meek in spirit (*El Fakir*),

"IMAUM ALI ZADE."

Mankind clothe their ignorance by the all-comprehending term, *mystery*, which is but another name for ignorance. When they find a subject baffling their powers of comprehension, they are ever ready to exclaim, "It is a great mys-

tery, beyond the ken of reason, and it is a great sacrilege to attempt to reveal it; for God has concealed it from human effort." Alas for human ignorance! crushing the millions down, down the dark and loathsome ways of death. Alas for human weakness! grasping the shadow, while the substance passes by unobserved.

If we live long, we shall know much. The world is better than it once was; it is worse than it will be by and by.

One Monday morning, while sitting in a friend's office, the writer was *en reverie*, and called for a reporter to take down what he was about to say. The reporter took his seat, and gave forth what Albro called "the following beautiful portraiture of coming time on earth. It will be seen that *the reverist* is reading from a paper, the date of which is A.D. 3869; and the article which he is reading is copied from another paper, found in a bottle floating on the ocean, the date of which was A.D. 2869. It is the poetry of prophecy." At least, so said the paper it appeared in.

"To a certain few who are blind to the facts of progress, who do not see that the world moves with a rapidity never equalled since creation, it will be strange, and yet 'tis true.

"The article is evidently a part of a letter from one friend to another. A portion of the silk on which it was printed had been so defaced by the ravages of time, that it was exceedingly difficult to decipher the contents; and therefore we are compelled to omit the commencement of the letter, and can only present a portion of its conclusion.

"We present our readers this noon with this rich relic of antiquity, being a part of the contents of a news journal printed on silk in the olden time. Its date is Feb. 8, A.D. 2869, exactly a thousand years ago, this being Aug. 5, A.D. 3869. We make the following extracts for the purpose of showing our six millions of readers the wonderful contrast between the present condition of the human race, and the astonishing barbarism (which, by the way, was at

that time, 2869, regarded as the very essence of civilization and social perfection) of that dark age.

“Our readers will notice the tone of pride in which the writer speaks, when contrasting the age in which he lived with the uncouth barbarism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. But here is the article: it speaks for itself: —

“‘Ah, my lovely Zolivia! would that I could spare the time to fly to thee on the wings of love, that I might drink in the soul-floods ever gushing from the snowy fountain of thy gentle spirit! but, alas! it cannot be. Zolivia, my lovely one, the soul of thy Dalvin yearns to be free from the thralldom to which it has so long been subjected; and he longs to sleep, or, as the savages of the nineteenth century used in their ignorance to express it, — die. In the dark ages whose history I have lately been reading, my Zolivia, men lived to an astonishing age, because they were so utterly ignorant of the laws of life and development, that they plodded on through sixty, seventy, and, in rare cases, even a hundred years, ere they completed their outer spiritual growth, which is essential to a passage over the river to the first form of the second life. Their ignorance, my love-bird, was such, that diseases and frightful disorders without number afflicted them; and a healthy human cranium was scarcely ever seen, and, consequently, a perfect human pleasure seldom if ever enjoyed or experienced: and, as a further consequence of their darkened state, they were subject to mental disorders of the most terrible kind, among which, as I learn from the perusal of their history, were two of a peculiarly distressing nature. These were, first, a strange fatuity, which caused them to imagine untold perfections residing in a kind of earth, or lustrous metal, which they called gold; the same, Zolivia, with which the worship-temples of our cities are built. This strange disease, which so sadly afflicted the barbarians of the nineteenth century,

affected the eyes in such a manner, that nothing was regarded as beautiful unless it had a yellow hue; and, strange as it may seem to you, no man had influence, or was considered even respectable, unless he possessed a large amount of small medals made of this yellow earth, together with large bundles of sheets of paper adorned with pictures, and which were called bank-notes. These pictures, instead of adorning the walls of their dwellings, were kept securely locked in ponderous iron trunks, called safes.

“The second disease to which these poor creatures were subjected, and which affected the nervous system in a most singular manner, was one known as political ambition. After a man had, by the exercise of what was then known as meanness, but which has long since become extinct in the human breast, — after he had accumulated a large bundle of these pictures to which I have alluded, the back part of his brain became inflamed; and then the strangest vagaries took possession of his mind, and he would place himself in a position where all the people could see him, and beg of them to lay him in a bed made of small bits of paper, called ballots, and attempt to carry him thereon, into a place more or less elevated, called office, where he was generally treated as a lunatic, and became the gilded slave of the very men who placed him there. The disease sometimes lasted for a very long time; indeed, very frequently for a whole life, but was sometimes cured by saline draughts, or a bath or two in a river whose waters were salt.

“The people would occasionally place the patient in a wherry or boat, and then row up the stream, where the bath was taken, and convalescence generally followed. Let us return. I stated I was weary, my Zolivia, but I know that I shall soon pass through the transition, my lovely one, and, in my new form, will often visit thee, and avail myself of my privilege to sometimes bear thee with me to the halls and temples in the spirit-realms of Jupiter and Saturn. It

is thirty years, Zolivia, since my birth on earth, and I am growing old. I have recently taken a retrospective glance down the dim vista of the past, and have been comparing our present condition with that of the people of the dark age of the nineteenth century, as I have told thee. They had a species of animal, called the horse, in those early times, which has long since become extinct. They also had machines called locomotives, which, considering their ignorance of mechanics, were very ingeniously constructed; they were impelled by vapor, and roared and rumbled over the surface of the earth at the rate of fifty miles an hour; rather slow speed for these days of aerial navigation. Then it took more than a week to cross the sea, from the European to the American continent, a journey which we now make in forty hours. They also transmitted thought through metallic wires in those days, Zolivia, which they called telegraphs. It is amusing and instructive to think of the imperfection of every thing in those days; our rapid means of personal transit and of thought-transmission in this present year, 2869, and the snail-like paces of 1869. At that early date, men slew animals called oxen, sheep, and swine, for food. Statues and pictures of these singular-looking beasts may be seen occasionally in our antique museums. There is but little room for wonder or surprise that the human soul failed to develop its powers under the influence of such horrible food; for we in this age, Zolivia, realize the truth, and know that the soul and body, fed on the aromas distilled and extracted from the blood and gore of slaughtered brutes, cannot reap the fruits which the intellect and soul of man was intended to from the glowing realms of love and wisdom beyond the azure skies. We know, Zolivia, that the soul can grow, expand, purify, and become melodious, only when sustained by the fine electric, magnetic, odyllic, and edeonic aromas which evolve from the finer department of the floral, faunal; and fruitful kingdoms of nature, in the lower and upper realms.

“‘In those days of human infancy, my gazelle-eyed Zolivia, men failed to realize that the stupidities, ferocities, hatreds, and, in fact, every quality of every brute, was and is incarnated, condensed, and crystallized in the flesh and essences of the physical structure thereof. We in this age know that man is not sustained by flesh or substance, but by the essences, or protoplasmal aromas thereof, which are by the stomach extracted therefrom, and which there assimilate with and form part of the blood, and then, by virtue of still more important changes, pass to the nerves, and, still refining and ascending, become the pabulum of the human spirit itself, — the protoplasm of the immortal soul.

“‘History informs us, my precious one, that the ancient people of the nineteenth century were savages, barbarians, selfish sycophants, and fawning knaves, because, my love-light, the essences of the flesh they ate contained and imparted the qualities of the beasts that furnish it. In these days (2869) we reject such things, and, as a consequence, need not the aid of metallic wires to transmit thought, but do it by the exercise of clarified mind.

“‘In the nineteenth century (the night-time of the human mind), mankind required a materio-tangible and sensational proof and demonstration of the fact of immortality. What an astonishing statement! and yet it is true. It makes us smile, when we look back and realize their astonishing obtuseness. It is amusing, Zolivia, when we picture to ourselves spirits, angels, seraphs, edeons, arsarsaphs, being actually compelled to make noises on tables, or to clarify portions of the brains of certain persons called mediums, in order to prove man an immortal being. This state of things has long since ceased, my best beloved, and men know better than to saturate their forms with poisons. Men no longer inhale the smoke of a burning vegetable called tobacco, or of a gum called opium, as they did in the dark ages of the nineteenth century. They no longer drink

chemical liquids and fiery compounds known as tea, coffee, wine, and alcohol; nor do we subsist upon roots which grow in the ground, for those were evidently intended not for man, but for the beasts which lived in those days, and which were provided with horn-like protuberances, wherewith to dig them from the soil.

“We now inhale pure air, and are not poisoned by the rarefied and partially burned oxygen of stove-furnished rooms; nor do we waste our physical powers and excellences for the sake of a passing moment of pleasure, which is false, fleeting, evanescent, and hollow, and consequently do not sap the foundations of life, from which flow the finer emotions and feelings of the spirit.

“But our education commences in the bodies and souls of our parents, years before we are born; consequently, we have none of the strange-looking men which people of the dark ages of the nineteenth century called physicians, or doctors, who were endowed with a knowledge of the science of poisons: for it is a fact, Zolivia, that whenever a man or woman became poisoned, those persons straightway administered poison still more deadly than the original: yet, in spite of all this, the people lived to the astonishing age of sixty, seventy, and sometimes eighty or more years. This resulted, however, from the fact that men took more care of their bodies than their minds; for if, like us, they knew how to expand the soul, and fit it for the skies, they would sooner have left the earth, and mounted aloft to a happier home.’

“Thus ends the part of the letter we have thus far been able to decipher. We have engaged the services of an eminent cryptographist, who will furnish further translations at another time.” Thus ended the prophetic revery.

Probably, in the days when this prophecy shall be realized, we shall know more of the infinite resources of the spirits than we do to-day, and, perhaps, have an under-



standable theory as to *how* they work their wonders: till we do have such a theory, let us be content with receiving facts, — facts accruing by thousands in the Davenport *séances*.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

IT was decreed by “King,” that on the occasion of the first evening *séance* at 195 Bowery, only thirty tickets should be issued, which number the professor himself distributed. It is needless to say that they were at a premium, and might have been disposed of at a large profit; but mere money-getting constituted no part of the Davenport programme, although that item did enter largely into the account with certain of their employees, both then and since, — men who would sell the smiles of God himself for so much ready coin. And some of these men, to the writer’s certain knowledge, saw and could see nothing more in the wonderful displays of spiritual power than a ready and available means of accumulating money; and, when they found that they could bend neither the power nor their proxies to their selfish ends, they invariably turned against the Davenports, and sought, by every fair and foul means too, to injure them in public estimation: with what success, may be seen from the fact, that the halls, when they exhibit, are crowded from stage to door, — frequently not less than four thousand persons being present at one time, as was repeatedly the case in New York and elsewhere, within this present year, 1869.

The news had gone forth of the proposed *séance*, and New York (always a sensational town) now fairly buzzed with excitement. The street was literally packed with

thousands of live men, all anxious to find out what two or three dead ones were going to do; and it was amusing to mark the curious shifts people resorted to in order to gain admission to the charmed circle. Some declared they had come various distances, from ten miles to two thousand, expressly to attend that *post mortem* entertainment; others offered ten, twenty, and even as high as two hundred dollars for a ticket; and one man swore he'd mortgage his time for six weeks if they'd only let him in; while another party alleged that they were to take ship next morning for Europe, and, this being the only chance, they begged hard to be admitted: but it was no go, — the edict had gone forth, and they must sup the flagon of bitter disappointment; and they did.

But, while the people could not get in, it was no easy task for the Davenports themselves to reach their hall; and they only achieved it by help of a few blue-coated policemen. And now came a singular trial of the Davenport brothers. A man of great note and enterprise, observing the excitement, and believing he could make large sums if he could engage and exhibit them, came in, and made them dazzling pecuniary offers, besides their whole expenses, and whatever else they needed, for the period of one year. Now, the Davenports were poor, and needed the money much, and, doubtless, the temptation had its weight; yet it is doubtful if they would have been allowed to accept the offer, however well disposed to do so, because the power behind them evidently knew better what course it was best for them to pursue, and determined that they should move in the path themselves dictated, no matter what other power sought to turn them aside into other channels and grooves. I have seen the same drama played with others than these brothers Davenport, but ever and always with the same results: the spirits governed to suit themselves, ever. It is difficult for me to understand the notorious fact, that no

medium, however brilliant (with the single exception of Thomas L. Harris, reported to be worth some millions now), has ever grown rich from his or her profession. I have known them to have very much money; but I never knew them to keep possession thereof. Witness the case of D. D. Home, and his half million! It slipped from him as water from a duck's back. But why?

For five successive nights, the little hall was filled with anxious investigators, most of whom went away happier for having gone there.

Meanwhile, a scheme was being hatched, of such a subtle, devilish nature, to destroy the prestige of the media, that none but a large mind, badly soured by disappointment and envy, could have conceived it, much less have attempted its execution. What that plot was will presently be shown.

On the sixth day in the Bowery, there came to the circle a police-officer in disguise, named Kerrigan, — the same who afterwards became alderman of the sixth ward, and who subsequently won imperishable renown and glory as colonel on the battle-fields of his adopted country. A large party assembled that day, as usual; and Kerrigan took a back seat, and kept very quiet for a time. The whole thing was new to him, and there can be no doubt but that he honestly believed it to be a stupendous fraud, besides, from his Catholic antecedents, looking at it as being irreverent, if not blasphemous to a high degree.

In the room, at the same time, was an editor of a little seven-by-nine spiritualistic sheet, known as "The Clarion." This man's name was Uriah Clark. He took a centre seat. Davenport occupied a chair among the auditors at one end of the room, facing Kerrigan, who was in the other. In the middle of the room, surrounded by people, stood the table, and the media sat thereat, between four strangers, all of whom were skeptics.

By the side of this table, on which eight or ten musical

instruments lay, stood a small stand, upon which was a dulcimer. There were two guitars, two tambourines, two violins, two bandores (or, as they are popularly known, banjos), two bells, and an accordeon.

Every one of those instruments was floated in the air, over the heads of that audience, and played while thus suspended; the dulcimer accompanying the *post mortem* concert as if touched with magic fingers. A marble slab, weighing forty-six pounds, was carried through the room by invisible hands, and nicely balanced on the head of a man who sat beside Kerrigan, who, while every thing was in full play, sprung a dark lantern, and let a full blaze of light stream out upon the room.

And now began a strange scene; for Davenport leaped to his feet, and excitedly declared that he saw Ira, his son, standing near the table, playing on one of the tambourines, when the light was sprung; and that he saw him glide back to his seat.

With that, Uriah Clark — and no keener observer lives than that selfsame ex-Rev. Uriah Clark — took the floor, and declared that the occurrences that had just taken place were splendid proofs of spiritual agencies; and he called the attention of the people to the fact, that, when the light was sprung, the following instruments were being played; viz., two tambourines at the table, a horn in each corner of the room, a bell near the ceiling, and another over the door, forty feet distant, two guitars in constant transit through the air, two banjos at opposite ends of the room, the dulcimer on the stand, the piano near the side, and the marble slab keeping time on a man's head; which, if all done by one boy, or half a dozen, was a far greater miracle than if spirits did it: for all these were played at one time, and, when the light came, the instruments all fell in parts of the room separated by intervals of over forty feet. *And, as the light was struck, the man felt the marble slab on*

his head ; but when he said, "I have it !" there was no slab near him : it had instantaneously gone to its frame, thirty-three feet from where he sat, and no human being saw it go, but fifty saw it on his head !

But Clark's eloquence had no effect on the irate father of the media. His blood was up, not in anger, but indignation. "I'm positively certain that I saw Ira standing at that table playing on that tambourine. I say I *saw* him ; and I'm willing to be sworn to it !" were his very words, which, coming as they did from the father and manager of the media, made a strong impression upon his hearers, and perfectly settled the question, once and forever, as to his own absolute and thorough honesty in the whole transaction, from beginning to end.

But what was his utter astonishment when at least twenty persons leaped to their feet in hot anger, each one swearing that Davenport did not speak the truth ; for four of them sat by the boys, and all the rest saw Ira, as well as William, seated when the light was turned on. This created intense excitement ; for several others coincided with and sustained Davenport, they having also seen what looked like Ira standing at the table, fingering the tambourine. And now the strangest thing of all happened ; for, as soon as silence could be obtained, not less than twenty persons solemnly affirmed that not only had they distinctly seen the figure at the table, the double or phantom Ira Davenport, but also the *bona fide flesh-and-blood* boy calmly seated in his chair between two men *at the same time*.

The phantom *had* glided toward the boy, but, visibly, it never reached him ; for it faded into viewlessness within about six feet of where he sat. It was the same mysterious duplicate seen, felt, and handled by the professor and his daughter.

It was a very strange affair, but not the only one of the kind on record, either of the Davenports or of others, a few instances of which shall here be stated.

At a daylight circle held by the two brothers and their father, Ira and William were, as was then usual, firmly tied to their chairs; and, a fine company of ladies being present, "King" proposed to display his gallantry by presenting them with some fruit, it being then in season and high perfection. The ladies said they'd like to have some; whereupon they were directed to place their palms upon the table, and, having done this, their laps were forthwith fairly loaded with the most delicious fruit, some of it of foreign growth, and hence quite costly. It was good fruit, as was proved by the luscious smacks of luscious lips over it then and there.

The question then arose, Whence came this fruit? "King" couldn't manufacture *that* certainly, for God keeps the only fruit-factory in existence, supervised by an old chemical-minded dame named Nature.

Whence did "King" obtain it? The question was not settled before the *séance* broke up, when a man who kept a fruit-store right beneath the Davenports' rooms said, that, about an hour previous, the youngest brother, William, had come to him and bought and paid for quite a large quantity of fruit, and taken it away with him.

Now nothing is more certain than that William had been tied in his chair nearly four hours, and had not quit it; neither had the door been opened to let any one in or out from the moment the company sat down till the circle disbanded; and whatever power brought that fruit into the room must have done so through the open fan-light over the door, left so for ventilation purposes.

The man said it looked, talked, acted, and to all external sense was, William; while the company knew it was not, but must have been another of those mysterious doubles.

Before large audiences, what looked like Ira Davenport has been frequently seen moving in the cabinet, standing up, and handling the instruments, when the doors of the box were wide open, and the real Ira has been bound to his

seat and to the floor of the box with five hundred feet of rope and a coil of copper wire.

Again: the writer of this heard a gentleman assert, that he once, in the American House, Troy, N.Y., in broad daylight, with the Rev. J. B. Ferguson and seven other persons in the room, was reading a paper, Ira Davenport sitting about five feet from him, on the right, obliquely, when suddenly there came forth an entire man's hand, not merely the fingers of one, and pressed upon his side. Hastily looking up, he saw *one* Ira Davenport leaving him on the left side, while with the same glance he distinctly saw another Ira sitting in the same seat as formerly.

The phantom Ira passed to a marble table in the room, and then *went out*, not at the door, but like a candle. Of course, he spoke of it, so astonished was he, and received for answer, "Oh! that's nothing: there's three or four Iras running around loose. You must try and catch that slippery gentleman next time; and, I say, friend, be sure you hold him tightly."

The writer himself has often been seen in two places at one time, and, indeed, has the power of pneuma-projection to a great extent, being able to appear at points over a hundred miles distant from his body, but only when in peculiar states of mental and bodily health; that is, when unhappy, grieving, sorrowful, and in low health.

William Davenport probably possesses this doubling power to a greater extent than any living man; *but* — and here is a marked distinction — the *phantom* projections of a man, the Davenports, or any other, is a totally distinct phenomenon from that which so often occurs in their circles; for although these wonderful duplicates, as seen in Newark, Troy, New York, and elsewhere, resemble the projections, they are not such, but independent spiritual entities, clothed upon for the time being by emanations from the media; and their habiliments, and the likeness

between the seeming and transitory figure and the real solid man is so great, that no person seeing both at one time could tell "t'other from which."

This, in brief, is the only *rationale* the writer pretends to offer. We now return to the Bowery.

Kerrigan saw the boy, but not the duplicate; and, as is customary with policemen generally, he took it upon himself, without warrant or authority, to arrest the innocent; and, stepping up to the father, he said, as he grasped him by the collar, "I arrest you, old feller. You can't cut up your shines here, I s-a-a-y; and I'm going to send you to the tombs, yer may bet high on that." And he prepared to depart with his prisoner, who, nothing loath, felt rather glad than otherwise; for Davenport wanted to not only test the principle, but have it tested, in every possible way, feeling that the power was abundantly capable of vindicating itself: and, like an honest man, he shrank from no investigation, tried to evade no ordeal, knowing in his heart, that, if suffer he must, it would be with a clear conscience, and in behalf of the greatest and most momentous truth that ever yet dawned upon a benighted world. He gladly placed himself in the breach between two contending forces, — ignorance and knowledge, the shadow and the light, — happy in the blessed assurance that —

"Ever the right comes uppermost,  
And ever is justice done,"

in the end, even though himself be crushed out and ground up in the terrible attrition.

His sons, however, had no idea of becoming martyrs. They were unable to perceive its utility; and, so far from courting the romantic seclusion of a dungeon, their practical idea and motto was that of Patrick Henry, — "Give me liberty, or give me death!" Consequently, when Kerrigan undertook to capture them, it was labor thrown away;



for he might just as well have dipped his hand in melted lard, and then tried to hold a handful of fresh and lively eels, as to catch the young "Couldn't-see-its." They laughed at Kerrigan; they made faces at Kerrigan; they anxiously inquired of Kerrigan if his maternal parent was aware of his absence; and they provoked Kerrigan till he could stand it no longer: whereupon Kerrigan stamped his foot, and actually said, "Damn it!" And, as he went down stairs, their solicitude for his welfare caused them to cry out after him, "How are *you*, Kerrigan?"

As luck, or something better, — special providence, perhaps, — would have it, who should the officer and his captive meet at the lower door but Prof. Mapes, who, upon being informed of the facts of the case, told Davenport to rely on him, as he was resolved to see him righted, and justice done in the premises, and to call on him when he needed help.

Previous to quitting the room, a great many of the audience, numbers of whom had received free tickets, demanded back the money paid at the door; and the most strenuous clamorers for the fee's return were those who were on the dead-head list. Davenport paid all back who asked for or would receive it; but numbers cried, "Shame, shame!" and refused to accept the trifle back.

Meantime, Kerrigan began to realize that he had caught a tartar, especially when he found out who Mapes was; and, on the strength of it, he asked Davenport "why in hell he didn't run, for there was the street; and he'd be d—d—arned if he'd run after him: not he, indeed!" But one of Davenport's fits of blindness came over him again, and he was unable to view objects in that peculiar luminosity. He wouldn't run. Kerrigan said he was sorry, and advised a return to the hall; but Davenport grew intensely blind, and insisted upon being led to the station-house.

Finally they reached the goal they were after; and Ker-

rigan led Davenport up before a gentleman who was writing. Said he, "Who's this?"

"Ira Davenport, sen."

"What's the charge?"

"Swindling."

"Who makes it?"

"I'll be d—anged if I know."

"Kerrigan?"

"Sir."

"Do you know what that man is like?"

"Not exactly, sir."

"Well, Kerrigan, he's like a potato, sir, a potato; and a damned hot one at that, Kerrigan: and the best thing you can do is to *drop it*, Kerrigan, drop it, and in the quickest kind of a hurry; for, if you don't, you'll get burnt, Kerrigan, burnt, sir, burnt like *h—em*: yes, exactly so, sir."

Kerrigan turned to the prisoner, and, pointing to the door, said, "D'ye see that? Please to make tracks, with my humble apology for over-doing my duty."

At this moment, a number of gentlemen crowded into the office, and went up to the desk.

"Well, sirs, what's your business?"

"We have come to see what bail you want for the prisoner's appearance, and to offer it to any amount, from ten cents to a hundred thousand dollars. That's all, sir."

"What prisoner?"

"Ira Davenport, sen."

"There's no such prisoner here. There stands the gentleman so named; but he is no prisoner, gentlemen, no prisoner. It was all a mistake, sirs; all a mistake. Mr. Davenport is an upright, honorable man; and whoever says he is not, does not know him, sir. Gentlemen, good-day! Mr. Davenport, I'm sorry for this error, sir, and trust you will overlook it."

And the party, accompanied by Kerrigan, left the court, and went back to the hall in the Bowery, where, meanwhile, another act in the drama had been going on; for the Davenport brothers, finding themselves at liberty to do as they pleased, had assumed the position of masters of ceremonies, and inaugurated proceedings which had not only completely turned the tables in their favor, but had actually converted three-fourths of the skeptics present into confirmed believers in spiritualism: and, when the party got back from the court, their proceedings were under the full tide of success. The ingenious youths had taken one after another of the persons present into a dark room, and suffered themselves to be held hand and foot, during which time "King" and others had given unmistakable tests of spirit power. As soon as William clapped eyes on Kerrigan, his eyes fairly blazed with desire to have him put through a course of convincing discipline. They teased him, bantered, even coaxed him, to go in the dark room for just five minutes; but the elder Davenport's eye-disease had settled on Kerrigan's optics to an astonishing degree. At length, several of those to whom their fees had been refunded went in, and came out telling so many wonderful things that had happened to them in the other room, that they became ashamed, and not only repaid their fees, but insisted upon healing Davenport's wounds with golden plasters applied to the palm of his honest right hand.

The cries for Kerrigan to make trial of the dark room now became not only general, but vociferous; but they had no effect until some one intimated that fear and cowardice alone restrained him. This direct attack on the gallant Irishman's courage (for a braver man never trod the earth) was too much for him to endure; and he repelled it indignantly, saying, "I have two friends here whom I can trust; not that I dispute other gentlemen's testimony as to what takes place in that other room, but these men *I know* :

wherefore, if they return from it, and say that it is worth while for me to follow their example, I will go in, even if the Devil and all his imps are located there."

This was enough. A general cheer greeted the officer, and his friends went in; but, being Catholics, and not used to spectral handling, it is needless to remark that they didn't stay long.

Kerrigan then entered the haunted chamber; sat down on a chair facing two others, on which sat the young Davenports. Then, placing his feet on theirs, and tightly grasping their hands in his own, he ordered the door to be shut, and the lamp taken away; but not until he had, by close inspection, satisfied himself that only they three, and two of his own friends, were left in the room as the door was shut.

Scarcely had the light disappeared, when guitars, banjos, trumpets, tambourines, and bells began to float and fly about the room, as if alive and with wings; and the trumpet gave him such a striking demonstration over the *caput*, that he got angry, and, without releasing his hold of the brothers, roundly insisted that his two friends were playing practical jokes upon him, which they as roundly denied. At length, after one or two more trumpet visitations to his skull, he insisted that his friends should quit the room, which they immediately did; but, in an instant after the door was shut behind them, he was attacked by all the instruments at once, and received such a beating as only a brave Irishman knows how to receive with a good grace.

The poor man was whacked with the trumpet, wielded by invisible hands, until he was almost mummified, and bled from a dozen wounds, as if he had been stabbed. He flinched, of course, and yelled considerably; but not for an instant did he lift his feet from off the Davenports, or release his iron grasp of their four hands. Finally, he said

he had enough, and returned to the outer room. Here he made a speech, in which he fully and fairly acquitted Davenport and his sons of all trickery, collusion, foul play, or fraud of any kind whatever, and concluded by saying, "I know nothing of spirits, or how this thing is done, or by what power; but *it is* done, and by invisible beings, as my poor head testifies: and I am firmly and forever convinced that there is more in this strange business than either I or anybody else ever dreamed of."

Kerrigan was right. The writer of this book has been familiar with spiritualism for over twenty years, has witnessed its operations, in his own person and others, during sixteen years, in Europe, Asia, and in both Americas; and to-day he really *knows* less about it than he supposed he did in the first six years of his practical acquaintance with it. All he knows is, that *facts* exist, and are of hourly occurrence, in a thousand shapes; all going to establish the one grand fact, that immortality is the heritage of universal man. Another fact, akin to this one, has fully engraved itself upon his mind; and that is, that all he or anybody else knows about spiritualism, or any thing else, would, if collected, make quite a large book; while all that he *don't know* about it, or any thing else, would make the book a *great deal larger*. That's all.

Mr. Davenport, sen., in relating the incidents just recounted, informed the writer of what "King" said in explanation of the affair of the duplicate Ira; but as we are recording facts, not theories, he prefers not to publish that explanation to the world, for the reason, as said before, that we have had a surfeit of "philosophy;" now we want common sense: for which cogent reasons he prefers to leave all such theory-making to those better qualified to do so than himself. During the last fifteen years, he has become familiar with fifty theories on the *pro* and *con* of "how it's done;" and each proved to be worth quite as much as the other, and that was — nothing at all.

## CHAPTER XIV.

THERE lived a gentleman in Boston, named H. F. Gardner, whose influence among spiritualists was considerable; he being in some sort a leader among them. He was a man of excellent perceptive and reasoning powers, an orator of acknowledged ability, and a man of liberal views and very fair culture. Withal, Gardner was a good man, charitable, merciful, just, and true, and was such a one as could be trusted on any occasion; for he was a true friend, a generous enemy, and one to be relied on at any time. I would take his word for millions.

Well, this gentleman had been on a tour to the West, and, on his return, came to New York in the very height of the Davenport *furor*, and was introduced to the brothers by their business-man, who still continued to conduct all their financial affairs, as he had previously.

People of a sensitive nature take to or are repelled from persons at the first glance; and, as the brothers thought Gardner's manners rather *brusque*, they were not over anxious to gratify his curiosity in a private *séance*.

The brothers were given to understand that Gardner was a severe critic; that he had witnessed many renowned so-called manifestations, and had summed them all up in the one word, "humbug." However, they did not understand the man, — a fairer dealer than whom never sat in a circle, because he was both deliberate and just; in which he differed from almost nine hundred and a half in each thousand of those who are nominally spiritualists. But at length matters were arranged, so that himself and Mr. Partridge, before alluded to, should have a private *séance* next day at two o'clock; when, to use his own expressions to the writer hereof, "he had the most *striking* manifestation, if not the most convincing," that he had ever experienced.

It has already been mentioned, I think, that Mr. Partridge was one who dealt largely in matches, and therefore knew all about the luminous properties of phosphorus, and proposed to bring some with him next day, in order to throw as much light on the subject as circumstances would admit of.

When the appointed time came, the investigators came also, and so did the phosphorus, in a bottle, nicely dissolved in ether or oil, which solution the spirits rubbed on their incarnate hands, and then flew about the room, so that there appeared to be a score of luminous, ghostly hands in all parts of the little hall. After that experiment, the media were tied up in their chairs, placed centrally in the room, Partridge standing at one end, and the Boston philosopher at the other. This was to be a test. The spirits were to touch one, and then the other, quickly as possible, with one of the guitars.

Now, the investigators had not only tied the young men with ropes, but had taken the additional precaution to tie silk handkerchiefs around each of their hands, so that for them to get loose was a mere physical impossibility.

All being arranged after their own fashion, to their entire satisfaction, *à la* Kerrigan, the candidates for spiritual touches said, "All ready!" and so did the spirits, for they were.

Thump went something, square against the Bostonian's nasal organ, with a force that forever afterward gave him a positive distaste for "spirit touches." It was the guitar, which had taken him squarely on the nose, and, alas! so ruffled his equanimity as to make him utter a few terse sentences not usually spoken when a man feels particularly religious. The bridge of his nose was said to have been broken: be this as it may, however, one thing is certain, he bled profusely; and it is no wonder that the poor man became excited under the circumstances, for he was a

remarkably handsome man, indeed, the best-looking man in New England; and this, be it remembered, is not the writer's opinion only, but the universal verdict of the general jury, the majority of whom were of the gentler, but by no means softer sex.

And now that beautiful nose was done for. Will it ever regain its original proportions? Who knows, O nose? and, oh, nose!

Lights were instantly brought; and Ira, by whose agency Gardner supposed he'd ruined his nose with ponderous blows till all his shirt front was as red as a rose, besides which he had injured a fine suit of clothes, was found tipped over on his side in the chair on the floor.

A scene of contention now occurred, Gardner accusing the youths of assault, and they protesting their innocence. The fact is, that he was struck, accidentally, by the spirit, according to "King's" averment; and, to convince him that such was the case, Davenport proposed that Gardner should remain alone with the mediums, and hold their hands, to try if the power could not give him such other striking proofs of spirit agency in the matter as would exculpate the boys from the charge laid at their door: but, no! he had seen something, and felt more; wherefore he declined the tempting offer, but finally, after a great deal of persuasion, consented to remain in the room with the young men, provided Partridge would also, for he had no notion of trying it alone.

Accordingly they went in; and, when the lights were out (it being universally claimed by the spirits that there is a chemically-disturbing force in light, which, except under extraordinarily favorable conditions, exerts a dissolving and dissipating influence upon the subtle aura emanating from the media; and which they use by condensation, and otherwise, to produce their various strange effects), "King," speaking audibly through the trumpet, gave an explanation



of the accident, which appeared quite satisfactory to everybody present, and even to the doctor, when he did not think upon his cruel injury (for it *was* cruel, and, were not "King's" character for goodness perfectly well established, would go far toward ranking him among the badly disposed).

During this last *séance*, "King" told Partridge, that, in addition to a display just made, — that is, causing a guitar well marked with phosphorus to fly from end to end of the hall, — he intended to show a hand in twilight.

At this rather unwise announcement, one pair of interested ears opened to their fullest extent, and one man determined to take such an advantage of it as should *make* him, and break the Davenports forever and aye. But he reckoned without his host, and counted his chickens before even the eggs were *laid*, much less hatched.

We must here record some facts not generally known, even to the Spiritualists of New York, in which will be found an explanation of the "stuffed glove fraud," so unjustly attributed to the Davenports. When the offer of fifty thousand dollars for the services of the boys, before alluded to, was made to Mr. Davenport, a certain person, who was in his employ as a kind of managing agent, stood by, and, overhearing the rejection of this offer, at once became indignant, and berated the father roundly for not accepting such a princely sum, "fifteen thousand of which," said he, "you might have given to me for my services." The number of visitors at each *séance* had been necessarily limited, and a fee of one dollar had been charged. "Now," said this man, "if you don't put your fee down to fifty cents, take a large hall, and let all creation come in, and give me a good percentage on the receipts, I will send, in connection with another man, for the Koons family (physical mediums), and run you out of New York!"

"Very well," said Mr. Davenport, perfectly calm and cool, "there is room enough for a dozen such families of

mediums. I should like to have them here. I shall not alter the arrangements which the spirits have made."

From this time, it became evident that Mr. — was acting in a secret, treacherous manner, to accomplish some injury to the reputation of the brothers, in which, at one time, he seemed temporarily to succeed.

On the occasion of the promised manifestations of "a hand in twilight," there were present Messrs. Partridge and Clark, of New York; a merchant of Cleveland, Ohio; and Mr. —, the agent aforesaid; all, with one exception, anxious that the promise should be redeemed.

On that occasion, the Davenports had arranged four office tables side by side, thus making a platform eight feet long by five in width. Over this a cloth was spread, and seats arranged on one side only, both for the media and spectators. Over this table was the gas jet, emitting a beautiful broad white flame, which was tempered down until a fine twilight only was in the room. Mr. — had that day appeared unusually anxious, fidgety, restless, and undecided. It was clear that something was the matter within, and that he was exceedingly uncomfortable.

The manifestations began; and very soon Mr. Partridge said he felt something moving beneath the table, and remarked that he knew what it was, but refrained from all further explanation. It soon became apparent that other beings besides themselves were present in that dimly-lighted room; for there clearly and distinctly rose from and over the edge of the table (which, it will be remembered, was fully five feet across), opposite the sitters, the appearance of a slim, delicate, flesh-colored hand, the fingers of which, as testified by all present, were seen freely to move. It rose over a foot above the table.

The request was now made, by rapping, that the gas should be turned down still more, and Mr. — rose up as for that purpose, but instead of turning it down, he let on

the full blaze of light, and instantly dived beneath the tables, from which he soon re-appeared, bringing with him a white glove, all the fingers and hand of which were stuffed out fully with cotton rags. With great apparent excitement, he declared that he had taken that glove from the toe of Ira's boot; the inference, of course, being, that the medium had brought the glove with him for purposes of fraud.

As Mr. Davenport entered the room, he found the valiant exposé with his coat off, flourishing about in the attitudes of a prize-fighter, threatening to thrash the young boy, Ira, on the spot, — the three gentlemen present heartily laughing at the absurdity of the position.

Of course, the reported *exposé* was rapidly heralded about town by its author, who also brought it to the attention of the New-York Conference of Spiritualists, at that time holding regular Sunday meetings.

Of course, when parties took sides, some declaring that the spectral hand and arm was genuinely spiritual, others that it was a trick palmed off on the circle by the boys, a great and angry excitement followed, all of which, while temporarily damaging to the reputation of the mediums, proved beneficial to the cause of truth; for, in the newspaper discussions which immediately followed, both sides of the question were ventilated freely and thoroughly: for truth's, like freedom's, battle, is sure to be won in the long-run. One result of the excitement was, that the subject was brought to the notice of scores of thousands of people, all over the land, who, but for it, would probably never have given the subject the slightest attention; and I have noticed that similar results have always and invariably followed every so-called exposure of phenomenal spiritualism, not only in New York and Boston, but all over the land, and across the rolling waters of the broad Atlantic Sea. Again: I have not the slightest doubt but

that all these exposures are instigated by spiritual beings themselves, for the direct purpose of invoking public attention to the subject of human existence beyond the grave.

Spiritualism, like genuine manhood, ever and always develops by and through antagonism. In no place hath it ever yet flourished where it was unopposed, and its adherents unmolested. But wherever and whenever it or its ministers have had to face the frowns of mankind, its roots have struck deep into the heart of things, and it forthwith waxed wonderfully strong. So hath it been in the past: so will it ever be in the great future.

Of all these troubles, not one really discouraged either "King," "Richards," or the Davenports; for they felt assured that the right and justice would unquestionably triumph in the end, even though a former friend now turned squarely around, and openly denounced them.

Meantime, this man set himself to oppose another "fraud" of the Davenports. In some of their circles, tiny sparks or fireflecks were frequently seen floating through the room; and he announced how they were made. He had found, he said, a bottle of phosphoric pills on the shelf, and had picked up a number of them from the floor, where, he doubted not, they had fallen when thrown by the young men.

Off he went, and among others to whom he exhibited them was the Rev. Mr. F——, who took some of the pills, placed them on a hot shovel, and demonstrated, beyond all possibility of dispute, that not a vestige of phosphorus entered into their composition. The pills were homœopathic remedies (camomilla) used for medicinal purposes.

Foiled again, Mr. —— published one or two long diatribes in Greeley's "Tribune," and other papers; all of which fell dead as door nails upon the public ear. Simultaneously with their publication, a distinguished orator and writer published the following card in a Buffalo paper, in reference to what he knew about "the Davenport mediums:"—

“MR. EDITOR, — While stopping in your city, I have been very much gratified, instructed, and highly entertained by the kind and friendly reception which I have everywhere met from the good friends of Buffalo; and the memory of these kindnesses will go with me ever. But I have been especially and very agreeably entertained by the spirits, through Miss Brooks and the Davenports, as mediums. The performances through these mediums are perfectly overwhelming and convincing. No skepticism can long stand before them. The manifestations at Miss Brooks’s are astonishing; the performances of ‘Fred’ on the piano are startling, and I cannot even attempt in this short article to describe them.

“But my especial object in writing this is to bring before your readers the Davenports as media. Often during the past week I have sat with them, and have put them to all sorts of tests; not one of which has failed. On the first evening, the visitors took their seats around a large room, close to the wall, the boys being in their chairs in the centre, at a table. The moment the lights were blown out, the tin trumpet which stood on the table was instantly seized, struck upon the table, and then upon the floor near my feet; and while near me, so near that I took hold of it, ‘Johnny King’ spoke to me, and then like lightning started back to the table. All this did not occupy over three seconds. Lights were called for, and the boys were securely tied with ropes, with their hands behind them, to their chairs; feet and legs were then tied fast together, and all fastened to the table.

“In this situation, no mortal being could stir from his seat. When all was rendered perfectly secure, the lights were again blown out; and instantly the trumpet, as before, was taken up, and went like lightning to various persons in the room, and in the air before them, — so near as to be taken hold of, — and held conversation with persons in the body.

"At length it came to me, and, touching me gently on the knee, said, 'Finney, I want to talk to you: put the trumpet to your ear.' I did so; and the voice plainly and distinctly said, 'Will you go down to Seneca Street and attend a circle to-night, after this is closed?' I replied, 'I will.' Now, I took hold of the trumpet, and I know that no mortal hand brought it to me. Time and again did it start from the table, and, darting from one side or other of the room, stop, suspended for an instant; and, while both the boys were speaking in their chairs, it would pass to the table, so as to make sure of no deception, and hold conversations with individuals on various topics. Several times it came to me and talked: several times a hand, when all in the room were holding each other's hands, came, seizing mine, shook it heartily, patted me on the cheek and head, and gently pulled my hair; and this, too, when all the persons in the room were secured by a cord running through their button-holes, and keeping them in their seats.

"'Johnny King' has lately commenced a new series of experiments. He calls for eight bottles of ginger-pop, which, being set upon the table, with the hands of the media tied uncomfortably fast and tight, he proceeds to uncork with a knife previously placed there for the occasion, unopened, and which he, after opening himself, whets on the edge of the table, and then cuts the strings, when pop go the corks. He then 'drinks' up the pop (dissipates it in the air), and rolls the bottles on the floor. A light is struck, and the bottles are found empty, and no pop spilled, or to be found anywhere. In one case, 'Johnny' brought the pop to the company, and bade us pass it round, which we did, drinking 'Johnny's' health. Here's a fact for our scientific men. Let them tell what becomes of the pop when placed out of the reach of mortal hands.

"On Sunday evening last, this fact took place. Other manifestations, still more astonishing, however, took place,

while the media were fast to their chairs. 'Johnny' took a tangible form, and with his hands patted us, all the time talking and joking with us. Articles about our persons (such as watches, pocket-books, &c.) were taken from some of the company, without their knowledge; and when called for, a light was struck, and they were found on the floor, at a distance from their owners. Time and language both fail me to describe the wonderful and astonishing phenomena attending the Davenportes. Three or four instruments are carried over their heads at once, in different parts of the room, and voices at the same time are heard from the trumpet, which is constantly darting about. Before I attended these manifestations, I was very skeptical about dark circles; but that skepticism has gone to the winds. I advise all skeptics to go and satisfy themselves. I *know* the Davenportes are genuine media, and I fearlessly take my stand as their defender, whenever and wherever assailed unjustly. I hope they will travel, and especially do I want them to go to Milwaukee, and other Western towns.

“SELDEN J. FINNEY.”

The night for an all-important “exposure” at Stuyvesant Institute at last dragged its slow length along, and a fair-sized audience assembled to listen to it. But no exposor was on hand; and the hours slowly, very slowly, waned, until it was nearly nine o'clock, and still the exposor did not put in an appearance; and murmurs, garnished with not a few curses, not loud, but deep, attested the impatience of those present.

At last, the audience resolved itself into a committee of the whole, and resolved to send a deputation to hunt up the anti-valorous dabbler in pills and stuffed gloves. They departed, and soon came back, successfully. Mr. Exposor mounted the stage; and all he had to say, was, that the whole affair was a humbug. And so it was, as far as him-

self was concerned, for he convicted the speaker in the first five minutes of his speech; "for," said he, "I distinctly saw the toe of Ira's boot, with the glove on, and he *thrust it up and down over the opposite edge of the table, and twisted the fingers!*"

Said Professor Mapes, —

"How wide was that table?"

"Fully five feet."

"Where sat Ira?"

"Alongside of me."

"And you saw the fingers twist?"

"I certainly did."

"And you know that the purported spirit's hand was the identical stuffed glove that you are now holding?"

"Certainly I do."

"Now, my dear sir, will you explain to this audience, first, how Ira could stretch his legs *five* feet when they are less than three in length?

"Secondly, how he could thus not only stretch his leg with the glove on the toe of his boot, but by what process he could raise that boot, with the glove on it, at least two feet above the surface of the table, on the side opposite where you say his body was, sitting calmly on the bench beside you?

"Thirdly, will you be so good as to explain how a man with a stuffed glove on the toe of his boot, after stretching three feet of leg into five or six feet, could and did not only float and wave said stuffed glove in the air, but render his foot and leg perfectly invisible all the time, and yet *twist* the fingers of the aforesaid stuffed glove, filled, as you say it is and was, not with springs and wires, but clumsily, with old cotton rags?

"Fourthly, will you who have publicly declared your ability to do all that the Davenports do, or that, as I claim, is done by spirits in their presence, now redeem your boast,



and give us here and now a specimen of your quality in that regard? and, by way of introduction, just favor us by stretching your legs three or four feet, or such a trifling matter, and then *twist* the fingers of the stuffed glove, while it is on the toe of your boot."

Mr. Exposer's eyes suddenly failed him. For the life of him, he *couldn't* perceive the force of the proposed arrangement. He demanded three months for private practice, and that was the last of that farce. The affair ended as it began — in smoke. This man, however, afterward confessed that he himself stuffed the glove, and brought it for the purpose of injuring the brothers. It is by no means probable that the glove was raised into view by the spirits, but rather that the hand seen was a genuine spirit-hand. Manifestations of this kind are of common occurrence in the *séances* of the Davenportes, as also in the presence of other media.

In 1856, I think, Daniel Home, the Scotchman, was holding a *séance*, when, in the twilight, the fore-arm of a lady was seen to emerge from under the table, and float around the room. Presently it went to a vase, plucked an orange-blossom, and brought it to where sat the imperial queen of poesy, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, in whose hair the dainty fingers entwined the flower it had brought. Now, it matters not to me who may deny any particular instance of that sort of spiritual manifestation, so long as I am firmly convinced it *has been done*, under conditions admitting of no suspicion whatever. I have based *my* faith of immortality on something firmer than physical manifestations, no matter how *outré* or startling they may be; and yet there is nothing that brings so keen a thrill of joy to my soul as the occasional things of that sort which occur in my presence *when quite alone*, and in the dead hours of the night, when all embodied people about me are locked in the deep folds of slumber.

It seemed strange that any sane man should really essay the charge of fraud against people, who, to save their own souls, could *not* possibly imitate a thousandth part of the ever-varying manifestations of the viewless power we *know* to be human spirits. For instance, at a circle in Buffalo, "King" asked a lady for a *souvenir*. She gave him a bank-note, having first put a secret and very faint mark upon it. It was taken from her hand, and the circumstance was utterly forgotten; and yet, a year afterwards, at a circle where that lady happened to be by pure accident, that identical bank-note was returned to her, with her own private mark upon it still intact.

On another occasion, after a public *séance*, fifteen persons were requested to remain for a special test. They did so, and there came a spectral arm, which removed a breast-pin from the bosom of a lady named Mrs. O'Neil, and laid it on the table gently, before thirty-six as good eyes as ever sat in human heads.

There also appeared human busts, from head to heart, which remained incarnate long enough to be recognized as living models of friends long dead; and, on still another occasion, "King" himself appeared bodily, moved across the chamber several times, gazed curiously in the eyes of those present, walked twice around the table, took his seat in Ira's chair, evoked quite a number of apparitional arms and hands, and then slowly faded into viewlessness, where he sat, like vapor in the morning sun, and right before the faces of twenty good men and women. Talk about fraud in a case like either of these. It is the poetry of folly.

. . . . .

If the Davenports are impostors, they are the most magnificently successful ones that ever deluded the astute Yankee nation since the Declaration of Independence or before it. Not only that, but they have palmed off a gigantic swindle on the sharpest man in Europe (Napoleon III.),

and “bagged” the whole French nation besides, to say nothing of England, and her lords, dukes, earls, viscounts, barons, M.D.s, surgeons, authors, poets, lawyers, barristers, artists, clergymen, philosophers, and — *canaille*, which has more brains, and of a better quality generally, than the world usually gives it credit for. Along with England go Ireland, Scotland, Prussia, Austria, Monaco, Italy, and Russia, with their respective dignitaries, potentates, kings, emperors, the third estate, the press, and all their commonalities. Wherefore, if, I repeat, they are impostors, and do the whole thing “by the twist o’ th’ wrist,” all I can say is, Well done, Davenports! You’re a couple of first-class “bricks,” and no mistake!

But to me it is altogether *too* humiliating to accept such an explanation. I *cannot* find it *possible* to admit that these two men are “smarter” than all the world besides: there *must* be an outside agent, invisible to mortal eyes, engaged in producing these phenomena, and also in protecting and saving the media from violence and death.

It is the deliberate opinion of thousands of very intelligent people, that the power known as “King” in these pages has been the guiding star and sheet-anchor of the Davenports through all their travels, trials, and tribulations, up and down the earth, and upon the stormy waters. They have had one steadfast friend in him, whoever and whatever he may be, — a friend in every need, a friend in every deed, God bless him! Would that every man, woman, and child upon the earth could boast as good, powerful, and true a one as he has, during long years, incontestably proved himself to his *protégés*, the mystical brothers of Buffalo; for they have triumphed mainly through his masterly generalship: and, as the reader is doubtless anxious to learn more about him, I will at this point gratify curiosity by a brief account.

This extraordinary intelligence, “King,” whose real name,

he states, is Henry Morgan, declares that he was born in Wales, in the year 1600. He was an only child; and his father died when Henry was but four years old. The family lived near the sea, on a tract of swale, or bog-land (what we call swamps), such as abounds on the seacoasts of several of our Atlantic States. During that century, as all intelligent readers are aware, the ocean abounded with fleets of freebooters, or buccaneers, who made war and reprisals upon the commerce of the world, respecting no flag but their own, and carrying war and desolation wherever they chose, trusting to their well-trained guns in presence of a weak enemy, and showing a clean pair of heels to all stronger ones. Thus they became the terror of the seas, and commerce languished, while these wretches flourished. By one of those free ocean-robbers, young Morgan was stolen from his home, and sold on board one of the pirate-ships that then infested the seas; and he was placed at once in the position of cabin-boy, destined to serve in that capacity for three years, by which time it was expected he would graduate into the higher position of a more practical buccaneer. At ten years of age, his first act, after completing his allotted term of apprenticeship, his heart swelling all the time with thoughts of revenge, was to kill the man who stole him from his mother and his home; for which act of "bravery" he was immediately taken under the immediate care and protection of the captain of the fleet, a man named Sharp, — and well named, too, for he *was* both sharp and cruel towards those beneath him in rank; for which reason, although a leader of acknowledged power, bravery, and ability, he was hated in secret by his men, and was very often the target for innumerable curses, not loud, but very deep.

At the age of eighteen years, Henry Morgan was unanimously elected fleet-captain, over Sharp, who had been as unanimously removed to make way for the new favorite,

a decidedly better and abler man. It was a bad day for England, Spain, France, and, indeed, all maritime Europe, when Henry Morgan became chief of the Atlantic buccaners: for, with his immense mental resources, he soon reduced piracy to not merely a system, but a fine art; and he ravaged ships, fleets, ports, and cities, with as little compunction as though it were innocent pastime. And, when the headland lights signalled his ships in the offing, people began to fall on their knees and pray, as if panic-stricken; for the idea of resisting the terrible Morgan was one too vast to be entertained for an instant. Hence he sailed into their ports; and, while the citizens prayed, himself and friends amused themselves by making prey of whatever of value or usefulness they could lay their precious hands upon. After doing which, the spoil was loaded on their caravels; and, hoisting their canvas, they once more sailed away, in search, not of green fields and pastures new, but for whatever they could steal that was worth the hazard and the having.

This career he followed for a long period of time, during which he paid his respects to Panama, in the shape of fire and shell, in reprisal for some official wrong of which he had been the victim, as he did also to more than one European seaport. But cruelty was no part of Morgan's nature; for he never shed a drop of blood, unless forced to, and never permitted a child or woman to be injured in any way: for to do so was death to any man serving under his flag. These facts, of course, soon reached the ears of the magnates of the civilized world: and, instead of being regarded as a sailing horror of the seas, he soon became the hero of ten thousand firesides; and the name of Henry Morgan ascended to heaven from the lips and hearts of thousands who loved him for his goodness. Let it be remembered, that all these things took place over two hundred years ago, and that the world did not look upon a gay

buccaneer in those days as we now look upon a slaver or a pirate. The end of his career as a freebooter resulted from the fact, that with his ships he captured a large Spanish town, by rowing up the river upon whose banks it lay, at dead of night, with muffled oars, and between the frowning forts that guarded the place. In this way he landed over seven thousand men in one night; and when day dawned, and the frightened citizens, and soldiers too, saw and realized what had taken place so silently, they were panic-stricken, and fled from the place, leaving the treasures and the town completely at his will and mercy. The spoil was immense; and when, a few days thereafter, a division was made, his share amounted to over three hundred thousand ounces (doubloons), and he concluded to retire from the sort of life he had thereunto been leading. He therefore resigned his command, much to the regret of his men; and, finding his way with his treasures to the Island of Jamaica, he purchased a plantation, stocked it with cattle, — equine, porcine, bovine, and — human, — and then sent to Wales for his dear old mother and the girl he left behind him, resolved to settle down and become an honest man, just as all other bankers and rich merchants do, and lead a life of quiet happiness and virtue.

There's many a slip 'twixt — thinking about getting married and doing it. Morgan concluded to keep his liberty, and did so; the young lady becoming his mother's companion and foster-daughter instead. He very soon became a prominent and popular man in the island: so much so, that, at the age of thirty-two, the government conferred knighthood upon him, and he became Sir Henry Morgan. He was quite as good and great a man before that: but then people could not realize it, nor can they even now; for, unless you have a handle or appendage to your name, you are nobody. Just think how silly *all* titles are! Only imagine "The Angel Gabriel, Esq.," blew his horn! or "The

Hon. J. C. of Nazareth lays down the golden rule," &c. At the age of forty-two, Sir Henry Morgan passed over the border-land, and entered the realm of disembodied souls. He states that he distinctly saw his dead body, and the living spirit form which he then wore; that he could sweep with mental vision all the fields of earth; that he saw ignorance, especially of immortality, abounding everywhere, and that he resolved to do his best to dissipate the darkness; that he soon discovered the possibility of manifesting, and quickly determined to find out a method of doing so with power and effect. He searched the earth for a medium. He became acquainted with Ira Davenport and his wife, and saw that their children might furnish the right conditions; that he operated magnetically upon the family before and after the three children were born; that he has been with them daily since that hour; and that, through them, he has converted millions, and, in God's good time, expects to convert millions more. "For," he says, "so long as God will give me strength, and the earth afford me a medium, I will never cease my efforts until the last disease is conquered, the last crime committed, the last injustice done, the last mass said, the last skeptical doubt removed, the last thief or criminal born, the last gallows erected, and the last victim strangled. I will not stop till the last war is fought, and the last false doctrine is dead, the last badly-organized child has gone to heaven, and universal good reigns over every field of earth."

One thing that goes very far towards substantiating "King's" story is the fact, that research has proved that such a buccaneer really did live, and roam the seas at the period stated; and such a Henry Morgan *was* governor of Jamaica at the time stated; and such a man *did* actually have the "honor" of knighthood conferred upon him by Charles II. of England; and in a hundred minor points it has been proved that he spoke truly.

## CHAPTER XV.

HAVING become exhausted physically, and standing greatly in need of relaxation and rest, the family returned to their home in Buffalo, where they recruited during two or three months, and then prepared to take the field again. But, before that, their mediumship had increased to a wonderful extent; and it was quite common for hands, arms, and sometimes human faces, to be shown at, and thrust through, the orifice of their cabinet in a full blaze of gas-light, and in presence of spectators numbering from a hundred to four thousand.

And all this, be it remembered, when they were firmly tied, as securely as human ingenuity could do it, on more than twenty occasions, with not less than two bushel baskets full of clothes-lines and bed-cords, the spectators invariably selecting their own committee to do the tying, and see that all was fair and above board.

An incident occurred during the childhood of these celebrated men, which, although accidentally omitted in its proper place in this volume, is nevertheless quite too valuable and important to be altogether denied a place herein.

The father had taken them to London, C. W., and, while there, consented to give a *séance* to the mayor and other officials of that town, at the special request of a committee of the citizens, and for the express satisfaction of the great body of the people of the town, who had laid themselves out to prove and test the matter as it had never been before.

A great excitement had been created in the town; and, as it was the popular belief that the mayor embodied all the available brains in the place, the multitude gladly hailed the idea of having the case decided for them by him;



and when, about ten o'clock one morning, the father led his children up into the court-house, and into a room previously prepared, the people flocked thither by thousands; the streets were packed with eager hosts of folks, all agog to learn the result of his honor's investigations; and not a few of them imagined that he had the head devil and two of his legitimate heirs up there; and many a devout prayer went aloft that his honor would settle "*auld hornie* onct and for aye, amen."

It was summer time. The children (there was a third boy, a quasi medium, along with them) wore white trousers; and thereby hangs a splendid tale. They were first securely tied, hands and feet; then they were laid prone upon their backs on a table, and were lashed thereto by about four hundred feet of stout rope. When the mayor had done all that, he requested everybody, save himself and one friend in the plot, to leave the room. This was done; and he straightway threw some coats over the faces of the children, after which himself and friend once more began to fumble over the ropes. *They were covering all the knots, about two hundred, with a thick coat of lampblack and grease.*

This done, they removed the coats, placed the instruments beneath the table, darkened the room, called in as many as could find seats, shut the doors, and the manifestations began. The instruments played and flew about the room; and, to crown all, the children were untied and released, but not one solitary spot of black was to be found either on their hands or apparel, albeit the mayor had daubed at least half a pound thereof upon the knots and ropes. This was a fine test; and the mayor went to the window, and proclaimed to the crowd below, not only that the children had triumphantly passed the severe ordeal, but that he believed that spirits did the work, and no other power under heaven.

That afternoon, the third boy went to Detroit. William staid; and Ira proceeded to Buffalo, where, on the next night, he sat at a circle, as did his brother in London, many long, long miles apart. At each of these circles, "King" manifested himself at intervals of and during fifteen minutes; carefully, and, as it afterwards proved, correctly repeating at one circle what was going on in and who was at the other, — a feat of spirit-flight throwing the telegraph into the shade.

While at London, C. W., they were holding circles, when, as a special favor, one of the brothers consented to be tied on his back, and to remain alone with the stranger who solicited the favor. The doors were shut; and Davenport and others stood at the outside upon the landing. Suddenly the boy sung out for his father to come in, as he was afraid of the man; but parties in the plot with the man inside with the boy would not suffer him to open the door.

Suddenly the trumpet-tones of "King's" voice was heard thundering inside, saying, "Davenport, this scoundrel has got a dagger, attempting to stab me, the fool! and I'm afraid he'll harm the boy. What shall I do about it?" "Whack him over the head with the trumpet, Johnny," cried Davenport, rubbing his hands with glee at the prospect of the fun.

"Yes," said one of the fellow's chums derisively, "give him" — (something that begins with an "H"). It sounded like "hail;" but it wasn't.

"Oh! I'll risk that," said the fellow inside.

"You will, will you?" roared "King;" and the next moment the listeners heard a great noise which lasted for at least two minutes, when the door was opened, and the man said, "Did you hear something drop?"

"Yes."

"Well, what do you suppose it was?"

“We don’t know, and can’t say.”

“Well, by God! that was *me*. Knocked all to thunder, as you see, by that infernal trumpet.”

The fellow was almost jellified. The first blow had nearly split his skull; and it had been so well followed up, that he was black, blue, and bloody from head to feet. That man remains a spiritualist to this day; and is the first instance on record of a man’s being really converted by a regular knock-down argument. He never undertook to “stab a ghost” again.

Leaving Buffalo, the family went westward, and, among other places, stopped at Cleveland, Ohio, to exhibit for six evenings only.

Here a select circle had been organized for the express purpose of eliciting the basic truth or falsity of spiritualism, and to develop phenomena never hitherto known; for, undoubtedly, new and strange results of almost any conceivable kind *can be* obtained by individuals who have predilections toward specialties, as the writer has most thoroughly demonstrated in a variety of ways, but especially with the head-magnet, — a philosophical toy in the hands of all, but a rare treasure with others, — obtaining, as it does, all and more than can be reached by what is called mesmerism, with the trouble and difficulties of magnetism.

On their first visit, one night in their rooms at Cleveland, about fifty persons were present; and “King,” knowing the popular hankering after wonders, announced himself as disposed to gratify them to their heart’s content; and he forthwith asked the ladies to loan him two sheets, the one black, the other white. The last was easily obtained, and a substitute for the first was at length procured; and Mr. Eddy, a citizen of that town, by request, furnished a dark lantern; and a Mr. Dickerson consented to play the violin.

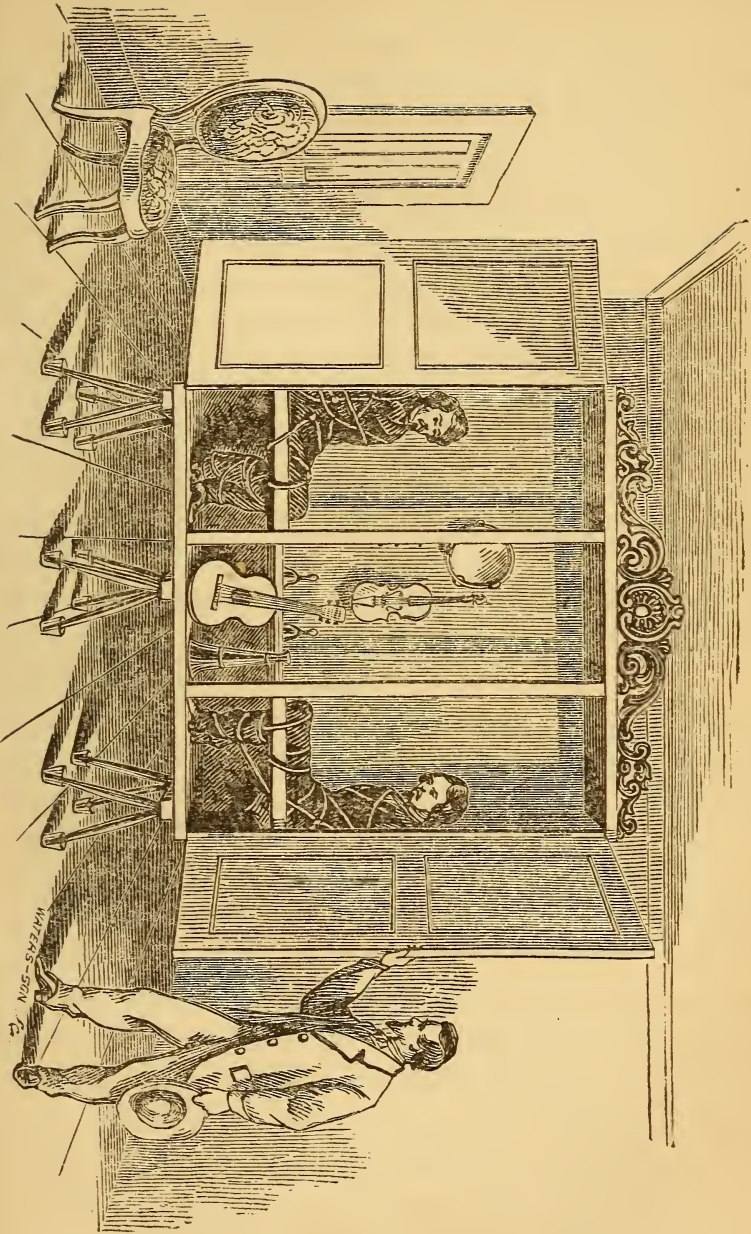
The room was forty feet by fifty in size; and each of the

fifty persons was tied to his or her chair, which was an entirely new feature. In addition to that, a silken ribbon was stretched along the circle; and each of the fifty persons grasped it as it lay in their laps, which was alleged to be necessary in the forthcoming experiment, in order to confine the magnetic emanations of the circle to itself; but, previous to this, both mediums had been thoroughly bound to their chairs. It should have been mentioned, that, on this and all other excursions thereafter, the young gentlemen were accustomed to give cabinet *séances* mainly. They were tied *in* the cabinet in the manner illustrated in the engraving.

All being now ready, the lights were extinguished; and instantly a voice requested the violinist to strike up a tune, which he did: and straightway the eight musical instruments, that had been placed in the box, floated out; and, while flying about the room, they accompanied Dickerson, no matter what tune he played.

Finally, the voice called for dance-music; and, as soon as it struck up, the sound of human forms leaping from the cabinet to the table, and there cutting it down in regular cotillion style, was heard. The same forms again leaped to the floor, danced all round the room, shook hands with all present, and enacted such a number of antics, that any person, not understanding the fact that the grand idea, running like a vein of gold through the bottom of it all, was the establishment of the truth of immortality by purely human testimonies, might have very reasonably challenged the manifestations on the score of trifling, and utter want of proper dignity.

The fault lies not with the immortals, but in us; for, as is the demand, so is the supply. If we cannot be reached in one way, we must be, and are, reached in another; and the wisdom of the eternal world gives the blind race just as much as it can bear, and no more. If we are intellectual





babes, we must put up with mental pap till our digestive capacities warrant and demand stronger food; and, if people can best be convinced of immortality by spiritual pranks and antics, the ends resorted to justify the means. The sight of a spectral arm in an audience of three thousand persons will appeal to more hearts, make a deeper impression, and convert more people to a belief in their hereafter, in ten minutes, than a whole regiment of preachers, no matter how eloquent, could in five years.

Let a man be talked into a belief in a hereafter, and, ten to one, he backslides in forty days, becoming a candidate for re-conversion just as fast as his mind expands. But let him be handled but once by a well-assured ghost, and its effect will cling to him for ever and ever; for any man, once convinced of the truth of spiritualism, may, indeed, recant his "philosophy" ten times over, but he *cannot* recant his own personal experience; for a genuine spirit-rap, once heard, never ceases to echo through the vaults of the soul, and will echo evermore.

In 1858, the writer recanted his former belief in certain tenets of so-called "philosophy," and interested partisans proclaimed that he had repudiated and renounced his belief in immortality. Partridge's paper and Newton's sheet did this, and knew better all the while. It was to him — it will be to every man — impossible to *disbelieve a positive knowledge*.

It is possible to gain our ends by humoring the whims of some one who interests us; and children, sick people, and the insane, are not seldom favorably affected by condescension on our part; for wisdom very often *stoops* to conquer prejudice. Spirits understand this, and accordingly adapt themselves to the precise conditions best calculated to produce the most solid and lasting results. This we regard as a sufficient reply to the "dignity" objection.

The tramping and dancing by the power that had stepped

forth from the cabinet continued for ten minutes; and, when at its height, the voice commanded Eddy to turn on his light. He did so instantly. The dancers were *not* seen, but the mediums were, fast tied as before.

Eddy slipped the shade over his lantern again; and, quick as thought, a voice right beside him said, "In just four minutes, turn your light fair upon the interior of the cabinet, and keep all your eyes open as you do so; for I, 'King,' expect to appear visibly before fifty pair of eyes: you will hear me when the time is up."

For the next few minutes, the only sounds that struck upon their ears were apparently those of some one handling the sheets in the cabinet, and calling for a hat.

Capt. Sam Turner of Cleveland responded to the call by throwing his upon the table. This was succeeded by the noise of a person jumping to the floor, and slowly tramping towards the centre of the room. Arrived there, the trumpet was struck heavily upon the floor; and a voice said, "I'm ready! turn on the light!" which being instantly done, the two young men were discovered calmly sitting in the cabinet, tightly bound as before, while standing eight feet from them was a colossal figure of a man, draped from head to foot in sheets, black and white, save its two extremities, one of which looked to be booted heavily, the other disclosing a face and features, once seen never to be forgotten. On its head was Turner's hat, and in its right hand hung the trumpet. It was the figure of Henry Morgan, or the spirit whose *nom d'action* is "Johnny King;" and he stood there for thirty-two seconds, in the focus of fifty-three pairs of eyes, gazing lovingly, yet awfully, upon the mortal men there gathered. Slowly placing the trumpet to his lips, he said, "Out light!" and instantly the hat and sheets fell to the floor. "*King*" had vanished before the light did; and instantly his voice was heard in the cabinet, saying, "What d'ye think of that?"



These facts were sworn to by all present, before a justice of the peace, and the affidavit published in “The Cleveland Plaindealer.”

At a circle for special effects, held in the same place by the Davenports, at two o'clock one Sunday afternoon, they were tied in their cabinet; and the voice called for some water, as “King” intended to try his ability in repeating the Cana-in-Galilee experiment of turning water into wine, — a feat that nobody but himself believed possible of performance.

The atmosphere in the room was such that the young men were in their shirt-sleeves; which, while it made it more comfortable for them, was also an additional safeguard, if such had been needed, against fraud on their part.

All things being ready, Mr. Eddy examined the young men, tied as they were, and looked and felt not only *in* the cabinet, but around it carefully. Things were all straight and fair, whereupon he placed a tumbler full of Lake-Erie water in the cabinet, as previously directed. The doors were then closed; and in a minute the young men complained that the water had been spilled or sprinkled over them, until their clothes were quite wet. This claim caused the light to be turned on, to ascertain the true state of the case; and it was found to be just as described. About one-half of the water was gone from the tumbler, and their apparel was saturated therewith. Again the cabinet-doors were closed; and a voice was heard, enjoining silence for one minute, during which time there was heard a noise like that of rapidly-escaping steam. When the minute had elapsed, the light disclosed the tumbler brimming full of a pale liquid, which tasted like the very best old Amontillado wine. It was not merely good, but excellent; and had a bouquet and flavor reminding a connoisseur of the rich vintages of a century ago, a bottle of which, here and there, is occasionally exhumed from some old grandee's cellar —

“ On the Vega of Grenada,  
Where the silver Darro glides.”

Chemists analyzed a portion of it, and pronounced it wine of the very best quality, — wine of such rare excellence, that it was sheerly impossible for the young men to have obtained a bottle of it at any price, even had they been disposed, which they were not; besides which, they, the cabinet, and room, had been thoroughly searched by a man alive to the chances of a swindle.

This incident created a wide interest, and challenged the attention of many a prominent man and woman, whose interest, probably, never would have been excited but for this startling parallel of a scriptural miracle.

In 1858, the Davenports took a trip eastward; and, by this time, their mediumship had increased to such an extent, that they were accustomed to have a committee of two selected to specially witness the manifestations near the cabinet, both of whom were allowed to alternately enter it with them during the performance of the weird, wonder-working power.

In their route, they opened at Lowell, Mass., and, as elsewhere, drew vast crowds to their exhibitions; and, among others, there came one night a rough character named Tom Scott, who managed, in accordance with a pre-concerted plan, to be elected on the committee.

Experience had taught the brothers the necessity of making the person who entered the box with themselves submit to the same conditions they did; and, therefore, Tom Scott was, like all others, tied in the box along with them.

But the fellow had concealed a sharp and glittering, murderous-looking knife; and, as soon as the doors were shut, managed to cut the ropes that bound him, utterly reckless whether he ripped the bowels out of the young men or not: indeed, the wretch slashed about him in such a manner, in

his insane fury and desire to do *something*, no matter what, so long as he created a sensation, that it seems to this day almost a miracle that they were not killed upon the spot.

With the knife still in his hands, he threw himself first on Ira, and then upon William, yelling out like mad, "I've got him, I've got him!" But the next instant he yelled to another tune; for the two men were tied so tightly that they could not move an inch, even when a knife was gleaming at their throats; and yet he was beaten with the trumpet so severely that he begged for mercy; and his friends instantly swarmed upon the stage, and made a rush for the box, which had by this time been thrown open. Scott came out, bleeding fearfully. But in the space of thirty seconds his mind had undergone an entire change concerning the phenomena; for he threw himself in front of the still bound Davenports, and, squaring himself for a fight, swore roundly that no man should injure them unless he first passed over his dead body. "For," said he, "I both felt and saw that trumpet strike me; and *I'll be d——d if either of them did it*. I saw a trumpet, and I saw an arm without a body, and that arm welted me; but the young men never stirred an inch: they were tied too tightly. At first I thought the arm I saw was one of theirs; but, when I threw myself upon them, I displaced the little curtain that hangs over the hole in the cabinet, and I saw what hit me. So let them alone, and go on with the show. *I'm satisfied*: you may bet your sweet lives on that, and win, *sure*."

That instance is not the only one wherein they have been attacked. On two occasions, persons in the box with them have drawn pistols upon them, and in both instances were severely punished by their invisible guardians.

In March, 1861, they were at a place called Cold Water, in Michigan, and had been there a week, during which time many men had laid heavy wagers on their ability to expose the *modus operandi* of all their manifestations; but, finding

that to be an impossibility, they lost temper, and determined to wreak their vengeance and disappointment upon the in-offensive Davenports. It was on Sunday, Nov. 11, 1861, that, unknown to the brothers, a large number of men, intent on mob violence, came to their rooms. As usual, they suffered themselves to be tied; which having been done, some of the men searched them, ostensibly to see if they had false arms and trick-apparatus about them, but in reality to ascertain if they were armed, and how safe an operation it would be to attack them. They were not aware that the ever-watchful "King" had already revealed their plot to an extent sufficient to cause Ira to arm himself, and conceal his weapon so safely that the men failed to find out where or what. The *séance* began; and, at a concerted signal, the mob, armed to the teeth, rushed for the stage, and attacked the cabinet with the utmost fury. It instantly became apparent that the wretches meant nothing less than murder, and would have carried their point, but for a Dr. Collins, who threw himself before, and succeeded in releasing them from the ropes. No sooner was this done, than a giant of a fellow seized Ira, to dash his brains out, when that young man drew his knife. "Stand back!" cried he, his temper for once getting the mastery over him, "stand back, or I'll strike the first man who assaults me!" But the giant would not stand back; for a second scoundrel made a dastardly attack from behind, seized Ira's arms, and for a moment they thought they had him at their mercy.

But they counted falsely; for, seeming to be nerved with the strength of a dozen men of his size, he upset two of the mob, sent a third one reeling over the footlights with a dislocated under jaw, and then, getting his back braced up and against a corner, he looked the very impersonation of indignant courage. "Oh! let's rush in, and grab him," said one. "Yaw: dass ish goot! — *you* do der rushing," said a Teuton, under the influence of half a gallon of lager; but it

wouldn't pay. They saw Ira's blood was up; that he meant mischief, if things got to the worst; that he was armed with a long, slim, slender carving-knife; that, in rushing on him, somebody was physically certain of getting *stuck*; and who that somebody might be was just then the sticking-point. They backed out, and soon procured a gun, with a fixed bayonet, wherewith to attack him; but the villains even then were cowed and conquered by the determined bravery of two almost unarmed men.

In Yonkers, N.Y., they were announced to appear on a certain night, and a set of ruffians in the place, egged on by better educated people, whose highest interest consists in the perpetuation of ignorant barbarism in their dependants, held a council, and resolved that they would not permit the Davenports to appear at all; yet, nevertheless, the brothers opened in the best hall in the place. It was impossible to get a committee to act, and they therefore went on without one, and carried it through successfully till the end. Then the roughs made a dash upon the stage; whereon several of them dashed off a great deal faster than they went on, some of them head foremost, as they deserved; for, unarmed, the brothers defended their lives and property at the cost of several teeth and sundry sore heads of the attacking party, at the closed hands and boot-toes (without *gloves*) of the courageous young men.

In a place called Orland, in the State of Maine, the brothers exhibited, and so surprised the respectable inhabitants as to create quite a local excitement; whereat one of the chief men and officials of the village, to whom they had refused to buckle, flew in a passion, and swore by this and that, that he would not allow the spirit-world to demonstrate its existence in that village against his fiat and will; and, in order to prevent it, gave out, so it was reported, a public notice that he would pay one hundred dollars to have them mobbed and driven away, *vi et armis*; and he was as

good as his word ; for Orland being a seaport, or near one, was well stocked with seafaring men, who, under the stimulus of his hundred dollars, which had been expended for whiskey, whereof whoever chose might drink freely, and gratis, too, were ripe for any thing that promised fun and excitement.

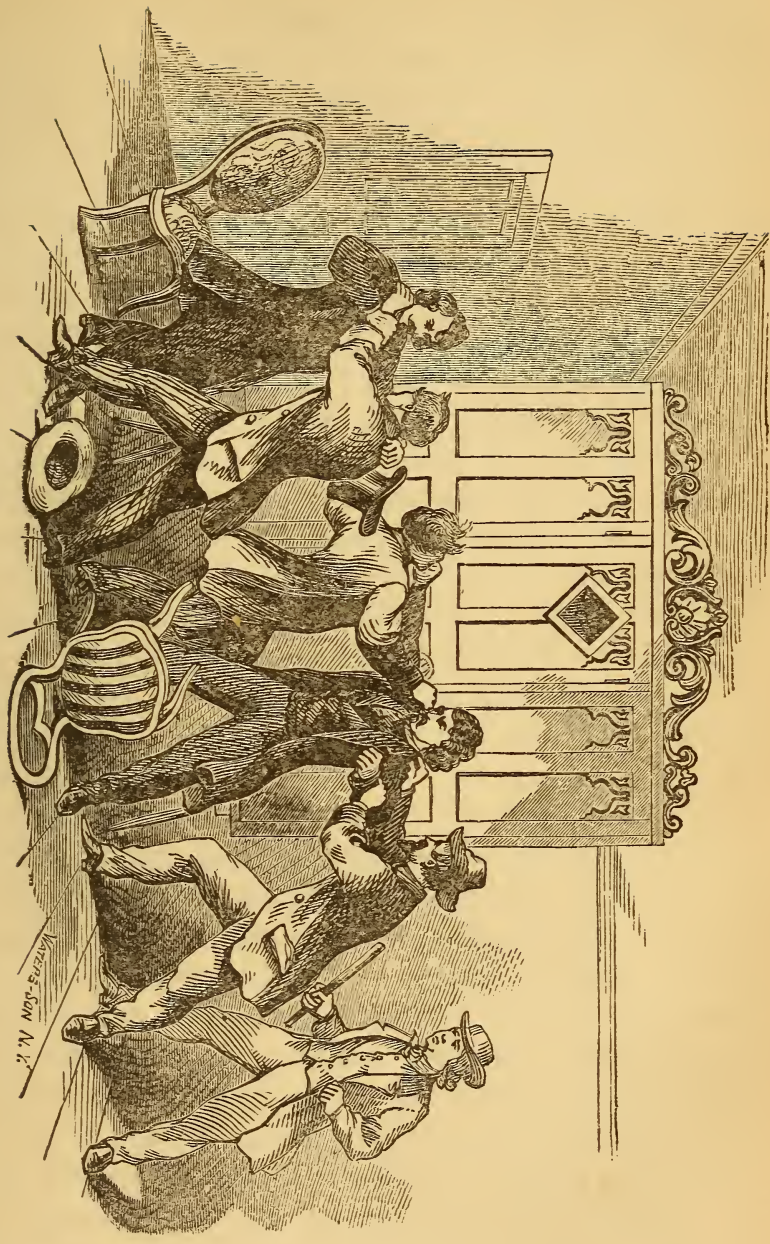
At that time, the lamented Rand was the agent for the brothers, and managed their *séances*.

Night came, and so did the mob. Poor Rand stood at the door, and received a blow on the head that knocked him senseless. When he revived, he acted as if he had been crazed for a year. Meanwhile, the stage was attacked, and the brothers found themselves engaged in a desperate hand-to-hand fight. Pistols were drawn, and things began to look hard for the Davenports, when some women (God bless their souls !) ran to the rescue.

This scene instantly excited the gallantry of some of the spectators, who immediately espoused the Davenports' side, and one of the prettiest free fights began that ever was seen. It was one indiscriminate knock-down, all over the house ; they *chassez*-ed and balanced, turned corners and reeled, squared to their partners, went down the outside and up the middle, — oh, it was grand !

Among the peaceably disposed was a sea-captain, rather old, and weighing about three hundred. He was enjoying the delightful time, when a burly fellow marched up, and let him have it plump, and ding-dong, square between the eyes ; and away he sailed, to mingle in the thickest of the *mêlée*, and in a minute more was banging away, right and left, at anybody and everybody. The Davenports, by this time having cleared the stage, were now standing looking down calmly on the seething, surging, boiling multitude below.

The captain wiped his eyes and nose, quietly picked himself up, as coolly rolled up his wristbands, and then waddled







off, like an over-fat duck, towards where the fun was most uproarious. He was looking for his assailant, and presently, clapping eyes on him, moved mountainously towards him; reaching the free-handed gentleman, he caught him by the back of the head with his ponderous left hand, and thrust that head through one pane of glass after another, until no more panes were left in that window. He then turned him round; and, while he held him with a grip as terrible as iron, he slapped the fellow's face until his eyes were in as complete a suit of tip-top mourning as ever eyes were in this world. The fellow wriggled, twisted, squirmed, sputtered, and swore by turns; but he could no more get away from that old captain than an oyster can climb an apple-tree.

Meanwhile, another equally interesting scene had been going on. There was a little, lame, pinched-up man, not much bigger than a boy of fourteen, also looking on and enjoying the fun: but his enjoyment was of short duration; for one of the free fighters treated him to a thwack across the organ which in New York is called "the snoot," that made the little man reel as if he, too, had been drinking old Curmudgeon's free whiskey. He fairly danced with rage; but saw instantly, that, if he attempted to "go in," in all likelihood he would speedily "come out" a decided loser by the enterprise, which he had no idea of being. He, therefore, began to look coolly about for a weapon; and, seeing what he was after, William pointed him to a broom that stood in a corner. This broom the little man danced after, and then approaching the *mêlée*, got a chair, mounted it, and then swinging it with all his force, brought it down fairly on the skull of his late assailant, who paid not the slightest attention to it, but kept on fighting as before. The broom-handle flew into splinters, and the little man tumbled headlong to the floor from the impetus of his own blow. Scrambling up again, he gazed a moment, and then, as if utterly hopeless of further vengeance, went at a gallop out of the hall.

The riot soon ceased ; but the Davenports kept on holding *séances* ; for the persecution made them friends so fast, that, before the next night, Orland was too hot to hold one of the disturbers, who escaped as best they could ; and as to the head man who incited them, to this hour he has not regained his former prestige.

Luke Rand, their former agent, in a pamphlet descriptive of what he had witnessed, says, that “in the town of Milford, Me., at a spiritual circle of twenty-five persons, a nice secretary was unlocked at first by the spirits, with the key, and numerous articles were taken from the depository, and distributed among the audience. The proprietor remarked, that he did not care to have his valuable articles thus removed, and that he would lock up the secretary, and see if they would then be taken. He did so in our presence ; and, by agreement of the company, the key was placed in the hands of a gentleman in the room for its safe-keeping. The circle again became quiet, every one firmly joining hands ; and, the light having been extinguished, we instantly heard the bolt of the lock slide, and the contents of the secretary were immediately again distributed among our company in perfect stillness. A large spyglass was drawn out to its utmost extent, and brought far across the room, over the heads of several persons, and placed partly upon my hand, and partly upon the hand of a gentleman from Bangor, who sat next to me. Numerous other articles were also distributed with the utmost care, in various parts of the room, where no person could possibly have walked without detection, even if any had been loose, or disposed to have done so : the gentleman aforesaid, holding the key in his hand all the while, would not have given it up.

“At a large and stormy audience in the city of Oswego, a committee, selected from the audience, tied and worked upon those Davenport boys more than one hour, putting on all the rope we then had, about ninety feet, and twenty-

seven feet of strong cord furnished by the audience. To this they submitted; and then the younger boy's knots were firmly wound and secured by new and strong copper wire, bent and twisted on with forceps; and then the doors of the box in which the boys were placed were sealed with wax and private seals, and every avenue by which any one could approach the box guarded by sentinels. Then were the lights extinguished; and the elder boy was untied in eleven minutes, every knot. He was taken out, and held by the committee, and the younger boy examined by the committee: knots and wire all secure. The box was again closed; and the younger medium, thus left alone there, was released from his ropes, wire, and knots,—every knot untied in eight minutes.

“At a private circle of about forty persons, in the city of Oswego, the Davenport boys were all fastened at the extremities of a very large and long table, with strong, fine cotton thread wound closely around their wrists, and tied in many knots; each wrist of each boy being wound many times, and closely tied in many knots each time, and then the threads on either side of each hand carried out a few inches, tied in a knot at the end, and tacked down to the table by a common tack, and that knot and tack sealed with wax. This was faithfully done by a committee. All had an opportunity to look upon the knots and seals, and all knew it was utterly impossible for either boy to move his hand without breaking the threads. The instruments were then laid in the middle of the table, far beyond the possible reach of the young boys. The audience were then all tied together by ropes and cords, so that no one could move without the knowledge of others; and then, on extinguishing the light, those instruments were taken up and borne about the room, and over our heads, and thrummed and played by some intelligent hand other than our own. This was certain, as instantly, on lighting the gas, we found the mediums, in every instance, firmly tied and immovably secure.

“It would seem that one absolute, tangible, physical demonstration, such as is often given through those mediums, well vouched for by those competent to judge and testify to the facts, might suffice to satisfy the world that spirits can and do manifest themselves to human beings here on earth.”

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## CHAPTER XVI.

DESIRING to learn more of what took place during the Davenport's sojourn in Maine, the writer hereof requested information of Mr. H. B. Emery, an estimable gentleman of that State. In due time, the following papers were sent by him in response.

Documents like these speak for themselves. “Good wine needs no bush.”

BRADLEY, ME., June 13, 1864.

DR. P. B. RANDOLPH, — By request of the Davenport brothers and yourself, I herewith forward to you a statement of manifestations occurring during their residence at my house. I thought best to send you a copy of the statement issued by the secular press at the time.

The facts herein stated are substantially true. Wishing you success in putting before the public the experiences and spiritual phenomena of these wonderful mediums,

I remain, sincerely yours, &c.,

H. B. EMERY.

[From “*The Bangor (Me.) Whig and Courier*” of March 26, 1864.]

We cannot spare the space for any more controversy in regard to the performances of these boys; but we do not feel like denying to a respectable committee the opportunity of

reporting the results of investigations, unless they come too often for our limits. We accordingly consent to publish the following, signed by well known and respectable citizens of Oldtown :—

“ THE DAVENPORT BOYS.

“These boys having been in our vicinity for some days, and many astounding manifestations having been given through them, as was supposed, a company of some twenty-five persons, ladies and gentlemen, selected from Oldtown and vicinity, resolved on assembling for three successive evenings, at least, for the purpose of investigating the strange phenomena. Said company met at the house of Hosea B. Emery, in Milford; and we, the undersigned, would make the following statement as the result of our investigations :

“It is generally known that the boys have a box of some eight feet in length, three feet in width by eight feet in height, for their convenience in the press of the crowd, and in which were placed some six musical instruments. At our first sitting, the box was not used. The audience were seated compactly on one side of the room, and the boys were securely tied by a gentleman selected from the audience in the opposite side of the room. The instruments were placed near the boys, the lights extinguished; and instantly the music was played, and the instruments borne over the audience, and often lodged in their midst. In the midst of the strain of music, the boys would call for a light; and instantly on striking the light, it was seen by the audience that the boys were tied as at first secured. We are perfectly satisfied the boys were not loose when the music was played; and, if they could have been loose, they could not have thus played on six instruments at once, nor could they have thus borne them over our heads, and in our midst, without detection. In front was a continuous line of persons, with hands firmly joined, so that no person could have acted as an accomplice, without two others knowing it.

“The instruments were borne rapidly over our heads, frequently touching us, and often inflicting severe blows upon persons in the audience. In the midst of this blast of music, and at other times, we often heard a heavy voice in various parts of the room, giving directions in relation to the manifestations. On one evening, the box was set up, the boys securely tied in it by a committee, and, immediately upon their closing and bolting the doors, hands, some very large, and some smaller, were seen, as they were put forth through a small aperture in the upper end of the box. A gentleman from Oldtown, of undoubted intelligence and integrity, was invited by the ruling spirit to take a seat in the box, and permitted to have contact with the boys when the manifestations were given. A variety of manifestations *were* given.

“One evening, a desk was opened in the room, and many choice things taken therefrom, and carefully deposited among the audience. A large spy-glass was taken from the desk, drawn out at full length, and carefully and in perfect stillness borne some eighteen feet from the desk, and deposited upon men’s hands in the audience.

“The articles were taken back, the desk closed and locked, and the key deposited in the hands of a gentleman chosen to hold it; the boys were examined by the committee, the light being extinguished, and immediately the bolt of the desk was heard to slide, and the articles taken therefrom, spy-glass and all, were again scattered among the audience.

“A door to an adjoining room was opened, and the entire bedding of a bed, save the lower sack, was brought out in perfect stillness, a distance of some thirty feet, and thrown in upon the heads of the audience.

“On two occasions, lights were seen, sometimes like stars, but usually in large circles, passing rapidly through the room. On the fourth evening, unexpectedly to all, the pro-

gramme was changed. The boys were seated as usual, to get directions for the evening, which directions were commonly given by raps; the lights were extinguished, and all waited for raps, but none were given. After waiting several minutes, the boys began to ask the spirits what was the matter? what was wrong? if the audience was not seated right? if the spirits wanted the box? &c., while, at the same time, the manifestations were really going on among the audience in the opposite part of the room. In the most perfect silence, the instruments had been taken from their places, and were being passed upon the heads and around the faces of the audience in one simultaneous and silent movement, while, at the same time, the boys, in the opposite part of the room, not suspecting what was going on, were importuning the spirits to commence the manifestations of the evening. At this time, in addition to passing the instruments over our persons, many of the audience distinctly felt the impression of hands passing upon their faces, giving unmistakable evidence of something unaccountable. These silent manifestations by pressure of the instruments and touch of the hands, were witnessed on the entire back seats, which the boys could not possibly approach without detection; moreover, they were distinctly heard by the entire audience at the same time in the opposite part of the room.

“There were many other things in the manifestations which might be mentioned; for instance, the pendulum was carefully taken from the clock, fastened upon the side of the room, and deposited with a lady without her knowledge. The clock was repeatedly robbed of some of its parts, leaving it to strike on in unrestrained succession.

“A shawl was brought from another room, and carefully deposited with the lady who owned it. Other articles were brought from another apartment, and laughingly deposited in places which the boys could not possibly have reached

without detection. The boys were also tied by our committee in the most secure manner their ingenuity could invent; but they were untied by some power with perfect ease and facility.

“These are the essential facts that occurred during our investigations. We leave it for others to judge by what power these phenomena were produced. For ourselves, we are satisfied, beyond a doubt, that the boys did not move from their seats when the manifestations were given, and that they did not, by any knowledge or design on their part, produce the results.

L. P. RAND.	W. H. GIBBS.
H. B. EMERY.	DANIEL BILLINGS.
S. W. HOSKINS.	J. J. NORRIS.
NEWELL BLAKE.	D. BICKFORD.
WINSLOW STAPLES.	W. J. PARLIN.
SILAS STOWE.	A. RIGBY.
DAVID HANSON.	S. B. RAYNOLDS.”
R. F. KINSELL.	

MILFORD, PENOBSCOT Co., ME., June 13, 1864.

Out of personal regard for the Davenport boys, and interest in the cause they represent, I feel called upon to add my individual testimony to their veracity and reliability, both as men and mediums. During nearly a year's residence in my family as a temporary home, I had opportunity to witness and criticise the manifestations given through them, in a variety of ways. Having been present with them at private and public *séances*, and become familiar with their controlling influences, I had every possible means for detecting any sort of imposition the most incredulous might conceive of; and I am happy to say that though I applied every test imagination could invent, without exception, my doubts were more than answered by the incontrovertible proof of a power entirely disconnected with any



voluntary action of the boys; and I was fully convinced, not only of their honesty, but also of the fact of spirit communication.

H. B. EMERY.

Few better men than Hosea B. Emery ever lived on God's green earth. The writer never knew a man more perfect in all that goes to make up a true manhood than this friend of years gone by; for in all things he was honest, honorable, and true, —

“And steadily bore, without reproach,  
The grand old name of gentleman!”

He has since passed over to the farther shore, where alone his peers are to be found.

Green be the turf above thy form, Hosea Emery, and long may thy virtues inspire those left behind thee to goodness, usefulness, and truth!

. . . . .

Proceeding slowly through the State of Maine, in which they spent two years, visiting nearly every town of any importance, they came to Bangor, the great lumber-mart and manufactory, on the falls of the Penobscot River, at the head of navigation, a thriving, busy town, and full of the very cutest and smartest of down-East Yankees.

One of these, Mr. Darling, a prosperous master-carpenter, man of science, ingenious mechanic, who had made notable inventions, who was an energetic and leading man, and who, as a Swedenborgian, was well “posted” in the matters not only of this world and its inhabitants, but of the “heavens and hells and earths of the universe,” wrote a piece in a newspaper, denouncing the Davenport manifestations as utterly unworthy of any angels, demons, or spirits with whom he was acquainted (and as a receiver of the

faith and works of Swedenborg, he thought himself authorized to speak for them), but an impudent and bungling piece of jugglery, which he engaged to expose, if they would submit to a test he would provide, without knowing it beforehand, so as to be able to circumvent it, under a penalty of three hundred dollars.

This challenge was at once accepted, and the town, of course, thrown into a fever of excitement. The newspapers took up the matter, as they must every matter which greatly interests the public, according to the great law of supply and demand. The town thought and talked of little else than the great match between the Swedenborgian master-carpenter and the brothers Davenport. It may be doubted if even a Presidential election would have made a greater excitement. There are usually two parties to an excitement; but I believe a majority of the people of Bangor expected to see the Davenports thoroughly exposed, and put to open shame; and there was somewhat of the combined sensation of a trial and execution at the same time, — as if the judge, after a conviction for murder, instead of drawing on the black cap, and passing sentence, should call in the executioner, and have the convict hanged, after the manner of Judge Lynch and drum-head courts-martial.

The night appointed came, and the hall was more than crowded — it was jammed. The brothers had no notion of the nature of the trial, and were, perhaps, as much astonished and as much amused as anybody, when Mr. Darling and his six confederates marched solemnly upon the stage, with a load of what seemed boxes and ropes, which turned out, upon examination, to be really a very ingenious apparatus. The audience cheered, as if the victory had been already won; and the few who believed in the manifestations were gloomy and perplexed. If they did not doubt, they feared.

Mr. Darling proceeded to adjust his apparatus. It con-

sisted of long wooden tubes, two for the arms of each brother, fitting closely, and projecting three inches beyond the ends of their fingers. There were similar tubes for the legs. Holes had been bored in them, so that they could be fastened to the arms and legs, or otherwise secured. While Mr. Darling and his assistants were securing them, the Davenports aided them with suggestions, advising them to fasten the knots away from their teeth, and, from experience, instructing them how their limbs could be placed in more secure positions. This cool and quiet confidence greatly troubled Mr. Darling. He trembled with excitement. The perspiration rolled from his face. At last, the operation was declared completed. Persons from the audience were invited to examine the fixtures. They were decided to be "in a tight place," and the announcement was received with immense applause. Editors, preachers, and other skeptics, were in a state of ecstatic beatitude.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen," said the agitated Mr. Darling, "they are secure." The house was hushed to silence. The two side-doors were closed and fastened, shutting in two-thirds of the cabinet, then the centre door was shut, *and instantly bolted on the inside — by whom?*

Mr. Darling heard the sound with a consternation he could not conceal, but began to seal up the doors with sealing-wax, as if any one could open them unobserved, under his eyes and the eyes of the whole assembly. Directly the instruments in the cabinet began to be played, hands and arms were displayed at an opening near the top of the centre-door, the trumpet was thrown out of the cabinet, and then the doors suddenly opened, and the boys found as firmly secured as ever. The doors were closed again. A great rattling and whisking of ropes was heard for a few moments; the doors were opened, and the brothers stood up as free as when they had walked into the cabinet.

Now the applause came from the other side, with mock-

ing cries of, "Darling, Darling!" Mr. Darling gave it up like a man. He had done his best. If anybody could do better, he was welcome to try.

Their success in Bangor was, of course, triumphant, as it was generally throughout the State, and wherever the people gave the phenomena a fair or even unfair examination. An affidavit was drawn up, subscribed and sworn to by a number of leading and respectable citizens, who imagined that everybody would believe what they swore to; and, of course, they had the mortification of finding that their testimony had not the slightest weight with those who were determined that they would not believe, or whose minds were so constituted that they could not. It is said that belief is involuntary. It is certain that unbelief, or apparent unbelief, with strong and persistent denial, appears to be accompanied at times with great wilfulness.

Future generations will marvel at the bigotry and stupidity of the wise men of the nineteenth century, just as we do at the absurd folly of the crusades, or the wars of Troy. Much more will they marvel at the astonishing inconsistency of the teachers of the day. Here, there, all over, everywhere, we are told that the Jews killed God, because God wanted to make better people of them, and establish a belief in human immortality. After they had slain the incarnate Deity, we are taught the people repented of their terrible crime of Deicide, and during nineteen hundred years have been professedly trying to make amends by proclaiming the very doctrine which they killed him for inculcating; and yet, when men rise in their very midst, — these identical Davenports, who, of all others that have lived since the tragedy on Calvary, possess the only power and means of substantiating God's lesson, and demonstrating what they have but made rough guesses at, — instead of hailing them with gratitude and joy, they do their very best to injure and destroy both them and their testimony.

Consistency, thou art not only a jewel, but a regular Kohinoor!

Christians, nominally so called, will yet see that spiritualism (and by that term the writer does not mean harmonialism, or any other ism or ology whatever, but the bare facts of spirit existence and communication) is the sheet-anchor of the world.

The Davenport brothers have had to share the lot of all other useful men. Unquestionably, the day will come, when the world will do honor to their name and fame; and nothing is surer than that posterity will rank them at the head of the world's benefactors of these the dismal ages; but the men of their time generally fail to appreciate their inestimable worth; and to mob, and riot, villify, scandalize, and attempt to kill them, seems to have been the purpose of a vast number of their contemporaries.

At a place called Elgin, in Northern Illinois, in 1863, there appeared a person calling himself S. P. Leland. He gave public exhibitions of bogus spiritism; claimed that it was all imposture and deliberate fraud; handled the Davenports' names very roughly, and openly boasted, not only of his ability to expose them, *à la* Mr. Exposer and Foot, but that he would publicly do all that they did; and wound up with a boast that they *dared not* appear when and where he did, for fear of the inevitable consequences certain to ensue.

Having ascertained that the brothers were at a point five hundred miles away, as he thought, Leland, who had just before been lecturing in favor of what he now denounced, published a vaunting challenge to discuss the question, and to test the matter in a public trial.

Now, the Davenports belong to that rare class of spiritualists not troubled with the disease called "gab;" they *talk* little, but *do* a great deal; hence, to the astonishment of Leland, they immediately declined all newspaper contro-

versy, but accepted, nay, urged, the public trial. Leland's sight began to fail; and worse yet, when, next day, the Davenports reached Elgin, and forthwith opened in the principal hall. Leland (the fellow's name soils the paper we are compelled to disgrace with it) had shown what he called his "spiritual humbugs" for nine successive nights. The Davenports announced themselves for two, and publicly challenged the creature to attend their *séances*, and, if he could, then and there expose them. He would not be coaxed, shamed, or driven into even the attempt to make good his absurd and ridiculous boasts, like all others of that class.

It proved that a man who will do one mean thing will not halt at another. This disreputable challenger had made it his business not merely to charge the Davenports with imposture, but to asperse and defame their private characters, charging them with all manner of sins short of prisonable offences, and denouncing them without any cause whatever. The writer never knew of but two thorough and completely finished scoundrels whose cool effrontery exceeded that of the fellow alluded to. The Davenports met him, and asked why he sought to hurt their private character; but he denied ever having done so, and that, too, in the presence of fifty persons, some of whom had listened to his libels.

He had not courage to go to the Davenport *séance*; did not dare to meet them; has not dared to from that hour to this; and probably never will attempt to publicly contrast the seeming with the real. He suddenly left town for another place, published another challenge, and took the very best care to go one way, while sending it another. He held forth next at a place called Aurora, where he himself was detected in a worse fraud than he had charged the two Davenports with.

Hearing that a reformers' convention was to be holden

in Belvidere, Ill., and having an eye to the main chance, he went thither, and, with a great flourish of trumpets, announced that the Davenports would be there, and what great things he intended to do in the way of exposing and showing them up.

And now another curious thing presented itself. Churches, the wide world over, were built as places where not only God was *nominally* worshipped, but as forums whence the soul's immortality should be proclaimed; but no fact of this century is more notorious than that, in every thousand applications for the temporary occupancy of those buildings by persons above all others adapted to that end, namely, mediums for the proclamation of the very truth they were established for, namely, the promulgation of the fact that if a man die he shall live again, nine hundred and ninety-nine have been refused. And, *per contra*, in the majority of cases wherein such persons as Leland, Grimes, Van Vleck, Foot, Bly, and birds of that particular feather, have applied therefor, in order to show that spiritualism was a humbug, immortality a lie, God himself a liar, and all the people beasts by nature and fools by education, these identical doors of those very buildings have been freely thrown open, all too gladly; ay, and all the bells rung merrily, to call the people out for the express purpose of hearing themselves demonstrated to be no better than, and, in some respects, not so good as, beasts of the field. This is the nineteenth century.

Leland engaged the basement of a church, and then went off to another place meanwhile. And the day of the convention came: so did the Davenports; for whom a hall, seating two thousand, had been procured. But Leland's stock rose to high figures. Wagers were made, and he was backed at long odds against the brothers, singly or combined.

The clock struck four: Leland wasn't on hand; five: his

backers began to grow uneasy; six: his betters and abettors flocked to the railway station; he hadn't come; he was thirty miles off; they telegraphed him that the Davenports were on hand, and begged him to come for *their* sake, their own sakes, his sake, and for God's sake. Mr. Leland was *stone* blind. He really would if he could; but if he couldn't, how could he? Could they, could you, could anybody, under the circumstances, see things in that light?

Daylight waned, night arrived, and two hours before the time announced for the *séance*, not even standing-room could be had in the hall; and by far the larger number were men who had backed Leland, — some of them quite heavily. (The Davenports never in their lives either wagered themselves, or permitted or sanctioned it in others, in reference to the manifestations; realizing, as they always did, that bets are the blackguard's argument.)

The excitement was tremendous, and it was next to impossible to procure a committee. At length a selection of very coarse, gross, rough, unintelligent, and ignorant men, a sea-captain at their head, was made. They were five in number.

This committee knew just about as well and much of what was required of them as Leland did of moral honesty!

They seemed to think that because the brothers were mediums, there was nothing but what they could do, or at least ought to be treated as if such was the case; hence they made all sorts of ridiculous propositions, but were constantly interrupted with cries of "Where's Leland? Trot him out. How are *you*, *Mis-ter* Leland!"

At length the sailor, probably one of the "three wise men who went to sea in a bowl," insisted that the Davenports should take off their boots. The dolt! just as if any man, conjurer or not, could do all or any of the things that were done in their presence simply with their toes! — for instance, such a mere trifle as playing on eleven musical



instruments, a perfect concord of harmony and tune at once.

The proposition was an insult on its very face, and, that fact soon becoming apparent, the young men indignantly refused to submit to it, and very properly too.

The captain thereupon harangued the audience in regular nautical style, garnishing his discourse with sundry oaths. The balance of the committee, however, when some one cried, "Shame!" relented, and expressed themselves of the opinion that all was fair about the Davenports; whereon the captain again took the stand, and insisted that they should be unbooted. This fired the audience, — that and bad rum combined, — and the house resounded with yells of "Take off the boots! Off with the boots!" At this, Ira offered to do so, provided the committee did the same. The committee rejected the idea as an insult. Said William, "So do we." The audience took it into their heads that both parties should unboot, or neither; and thereupon the boot affair collapsed. Other equally degrading propositions were then made; but the people cried, "Shame, shame!" drove that committee from the stage, chose a fair, upright, and honorable one in its place, and the manifestations began and continued for two long hours in such a manner as to demonstrate not only that Leland was an unprincipled person, not over-fond of the truth, but that the Davenports were honorable gentlemen, worthy of all respect and esteem; the exponents of a sublime truth, and the instruments of its perfect demonstration.

Their success was fair, complete, and unmistakable; and when they quit that place, many and many a man thanked God that they had come thither; and of the two thousand people in that hall, scarce one but felt and realized that it was well that he was there.

## CHAPTER XVII.

IN the winter of 1863-64, the brothers exhibited in the capital of the nation, and created an interest and excitement there almost unequalled even in that city of sensations. Men of all nations, opinions, ranks, positions, natures, proclivities, prejudices, complexions, and influences, went, saw, and came away wondering, marvelling, troubled, nonplussed, and mystified: men of all sorts, from lean Abraham to the blacker of Abraham's boots; and among the rest, went one A. E. Newton, whilom an editor of several spiritualistic sheets published for a time in Boston. Mr. Newton was a man of a religio-metaphysical cast of mind, an acute observer, a thoroughly honest man, and one whose opinion rated high in value. This gentlemen was not an admirer of either the Davenports or the peculiarities of their development; hence he had looked with suspicion upon all that their over-zealous and sanguine friends claimed for them on the score of their specialty.

However, Mr. Newton attended one of their public displays; and what he thought of it may best be gathered from his own letter to the Davenports upon the subject, which was as follows:—

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 3, 1864.

TO THE DAVENPORT BROTHERS.

*Gentlemen,*—I feel constrained to make some expression to you of the satisfaction afforded me by witnessing the demonstrations of power and skill by invisible beings made in your presence last evening at Willard's Hall.

When, several years since, I attended one of your exhibitions in Boston, though a good deal puzzled, I was not entirely satisfied. Since then, the accounts I have repeatedly heard of your detection in imposture, some of which

seemed authentic, had led me to suppose that you did at times — perhaps from a natural love of sport — attempt to palm off tricks of your own as doings of the spirits, though I believed you were really mediums, and that some part of the demonstrations were genuine. Hence, I had come to doubt the usefulness of your exhibitions as giving evidence of spirit-existence, and thought it unwise for spiritualists to encourage them, since they probably did quite as much harm as good.

But what I saw last evening has changed this opinion. Whatever of truth there may have been in the alleged detections (and I should be glad to hear your own statement in regard to them), I am sure the exhibitions of last evening were so fairly conducted, and so overwhelmingly conclusive, as to leave no doubt of the agency of invisible beings in any mind capable of honest observation and rational conclusions.

The beliefs or disbeliefs of other minds are of little consequence.

Permit me to suggest, that, in my judgment, the value of the exhibitions would be much enhanced if they could be accompanied by a brief address to the audiences, giving, in an agreeable and rational manner, a philosophical exposition of the phenomena, showing their harmony with true science, and their object and use. They are so startling, and so seemingly in conflict with general human experience, and what is usually known of the laws of matter, that it is difficult, if not impossible, for many minds to believe even the testimony of their own senses. Hence, they naturally jump to the conclusion that they have been tricked or juggled in some way; whereas, if their reasoning powers could be appealed to by a candid and rational explanation of the *how* and *why* of the thing, so far as it can be given, their antagonism would be allayed, and their judgments more readily and firmly convinced.

Gratefully and truly yours,

A. E. NEWTON.

Subsequently, Mr. Newton corresponded with a New-York editor, and transmitted to him the following papers, — papers which, while unsatisfactory in their conclusions, nevertheless finally settle the question of collusion, fraud, and legerdemain, and establish the fact of the existence and activity of a power *not* physical exerting physical force.

The writer does not feel called upon to theorize at this point, nor to attempt to prove that spirits *are* the performers of these feats, further than to remark, that the *appearance* of the powerful producers of the phenomena is human; for, first, they have been seen hundreds of times and by thousands of persons, in *the very act* of producing the manifestations; second, all their methods are decidedly human; third, they express likes and dislikes precisely as we do, in the same manner and with the same terms; fourth, the motives they allege as governing them are human motives; fifth, we know of none other intelligence save the human, capable of performing mathematical generalizations; of logical processes; of consecutive reasoning; of mental aspiration; of having and relating mental experiences; of telling what's in a man's pocket, where he has been, is going to, and who is with, or is to accompany him; of who one's parents were, how long dead (if dead), where they were born; of speaking various languages; of talking, reading, writing, playing on music, playing cards, draughts, chess; of composing books; of making — as they did Ira — persons speak in German, French, Hebrew, Sanscrit; the persons being formerly ignorant of the same. This power in all respects resembles that of a man. - It talks, acts, thinks and moves as human beings do; is governed by the same motives. It laughs, jokes, tells the truth, and can lie, just as none but human beings can and do; and all this is, or ought to be, quite sufficient to establish its human identity, and that these mysterious visitants are *bonâ fide* men, women, and children, disrobed of fleshy garniture, come

back, love-impelled and duty-urged, across the mysterious bounds that separate our world forever from their own, to tell us of the lands beyond the swelling flood, the kingdoms o'er the sea; to point the road they have safely travelled, and to tell us that its paths are fair and smooth, instead of rugged and terrible, horror-hedged on every side, as we have been taught, and drank in with our mother's milk. The editor thus introduces Newton's papers:—

“We publish, this week, a detailed report of a scientific investigation of the Davenport phenomena, made while they were at Washington. This is the first close and careful scrutiny, fully carried out and reported, which has come to our knowledge. As it was made by an able and competent person, and one not a spiritualist, the conclusions to which he arrives will possess great interest and value.”

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Having been permitted to make a copy of the following interesting account of a scientific examination of phenomena which occurred in the presence of the Davenport brothers, while in this city recently, I send it to you, thinking you may deem it of sufficient value to put on record. It was drawn up, as will be seen, with special reference to eliciting the attention of scientific men, and hence with a minuteness of detail unnecessary in a merely popular narrative.

The author, Dr. Loomis of this city, is a member of the medical profession, and is Professor of Chemistry and Toxicology in Georgetown Medical College. He is, as I am assured, a man of no small attainments in science, and was induced to make this investigation at the instance of friends who desired to know the truth relative to these phenomena, and who, from his known scientific acquirements, skill, and thoroughness, had full confidence in his ability to ascertain the truth. He entered upon the examination, as I learn,

with a strong prejudice against the genuineness of the phenomena; and his conviction of their reality is, therefore, all the more valuable.

His statement contrasts strikingly, both as regards the evident precision of the observations made, and the results arrived at, with one which appeared recently in your columns over the signature of a "Prominent Spiritualist," — a statement made up so largely of loose declarations and hasty inferences, as to be of little worth to the careful truth-seeker.

It will be seen that Prof. Loomis, while candidly confessing the action in these phenomena of a "NEW FORCE" (that is, a force hitherto unrecognized by the so-called scientific world), still ignores the agency of spirits. This matters little, since every well-informed investigator knows that the professor only needs a more full acquaintance with this "new force," or perhaps only a more full reflection on what he has already witnessed, to be driven to the necessity of referring it to the active participancy of invisible intelligences.

Precisely what the professor means by the somewhat ambiguous language of his second concluding remark, is a little uncertain. If *no* force was exhibited "beyond that of the boys," why does he afterwards admit a *new* force? It may be that the boys possess both "*spiritual* and *intellectual* power or force" *equal* to that exhibited, though there is no sufficient evidence of this. But did not the facts clearly indicate both *intellectual* and *physical* power *distinct from* that exercised by the boys? Is it at all likely, on the basis of common sense even, that these boys, *by any action of their own minds*, produced and controlled the phenomena described? Would a boy, with his hands bound securely behind him, and his feet under him, be likely, without physical effort, to *strike himself* a "sudden, unexpected, and tremendous blow on the head," so as to

cause himself to cry out as described? I put it to the professor's science, or his good sense either. The probability, from the narrative, would seem to be, that the boys did *not* do these things themselves. If the boys did *not* do them, then it is clear, from the statement, that they must have been done by an *intelligent power* distinct from the boys. An *invisible intelligent power* is but another name for a *spirit*.

Again: is it a common thing for boys to possess sufficient "intellectual power" to *form hands* out of invisible material, — real, tangible, visible hands and arms, that can ring bells, wield the fiddle and the bow with dexterity, slap astonished committee-men vigorously, untie and take off cravats carefully, &c., — at a distance of two to four feet from their persons, while their own hands are tied tightly around them? Can the professor himself do any such thing, even with the aid of all known science? If not, then was there not in these achievements some slight *indication* at least of an "intellectual power or force *beyond* (as well as *distinct* from) that of the boys"?

I trust Prof. Loomis will reflect on these points with his usual acuteness, and some time give the public the results. If, however, it should be made to appear that the boys themselves (and if they, then, doubtless, others also) do possess these marvellous powers, such a discovery will be of scarcely less importance to the race, and no less difficult of credence, than is the theory of spirit agency. I opine, however, that a more full examination will only show beyond question the interference of invisible beings.

A. E. NEWTON.

#### PROF. LOOMIS'S STATEMENT.

At one end of Willard's Hall is a large platform about fifteen feet square, and three feet from the floor, carpeted. At the back side of this platform, resting on three horses, about eighteen inches high, with four legs each (one inch

in diameter), was a box, or cabinet, in which the phenomena occurred. It is necessary to describe the box critically, in order to be able to understand the occurrences which took place.

After a very careful examination took place, I find the box seems to be made for two purposes only: first, to exclude the light; and second, to be easily taken apart, and packed in a small space for transportation. It is made of black-walnut boards, from one-fourth to one-half of an inch in thickness. The boards are mostly united by hooks and hinges, so as to be taken apart and folded up. The box is about seven feet high, six feet wide, and two feet deep; and the back was one inch in front of the brick wall of the building. It has three doors, each two feet wide, and as high as the box; so that, when the doors are open, the entire interior of the box is exposed to the audience. Across each end, and along the back, are boards about ten inches wide, arranged for seats, firmly attached to the box. These are one-half inch walnut boards. At the middle and near the back edge of each of these seats are two half-inch holes, through which ropes may be passed for the purpose of tying the boys firmly to their seats.

The entire structure is so light and frail as to utterly preclude the idea that any thing whatever could be concealed within or about its several parts by which any aid could be given in producing the phenomena witnessed. The top and bottom of the box were of the same thin material, and not tongued and grooved, so that the joints were all open. The floor was carpeted with a loose piece of carpet, which was taken out. The entire inside of the box was literally covered with bruises and dents, from mere scratches to those of an inch deep.

I examined the box thoroughly in all its parts, and am satisfied that there was nothing concealed in it; nor was there any way by which any thing could be introduced into it to aid in producing phenomena.



The phenomena exhibited may be divided into several classes.

*a.* Before the performance commenced, the audience chose a committee of three, of which I was one. The other two were strangers to each other and to myself. I never saw them before that evening, have never seen them since, and do not know their names. One of the committee, a stout, muscular man, over six feet in height, professionally a sea-captain, and who remarked to me as he was performing the operation, that he had pinioned many prisoners, tied one of the boys in the following manner; viz., a strong hemp rope was passed three times around the wrist, and tied; it was then passed three times around the other wrist, and tied again, the hands being behind the back. The rope was then passed twice around the body, and tied in front as tightly as possible. Before this was completed, the wrists had commenced swelling, so that the flesh between the cords was even with their outer surface, the hands puffed with blood, and quite cool. The circulation was almost completely stopped in the wrists. The boy complained of pain, and said, "Tie the rope as you wish, but I cannot stand it. I am in your power; but you must loosen the rope." I remarked to the captain that it was cruel to let the rope remain so tight as it was; that security could be gained without being necessarily cruel. We examined his wrists again; and the captain *decided not to loosen the rope*. The whole work of tying the boy was closely watched by me during the entire progress, and thoroughly examined when done; and I must say that very little feeling was exhibited for the boy. No human being could be bound so tightly without suffering excruciating pain. His hands were released in about fifteen minutes. I then examined his wrists carefully. Every fibre of the rope had made its imprint on the wrists. I examined them a second time, one hour and thirty minutes after, and the marks of

the rope were plainly visible. He was pinioned as tightly around the body. After being thus tied by his hands, he was seated at one end of the box, and a second rope, being passed around his wrists, was drawn, both ends, through the holes in the seat, and firmly tied *underneath*.

His legs were tied in a similar manner, so that movement of his body was almost impossible.

All the knots were a peculiar kind of sailor knots, and entirely beyond the reach of the boy's hands or mouth.

The other Davenport boy was tied in a similar way, by another member of the committee. After being tied, I carefully examined every knot, and particularly noticed the method in which he was bound. The knots were all beyond the reach of his hands or mouth. He was as securely bound as the other, the only difference being that the ropes were not as tight around the wrists. This one, as the other, was tied to his seat, the ropes being passed through the holes, and tied underneath to the ropes attached to his legs. Thus fastened, one at one end of the box, and one at the other, they were beyond each other's reach.

Thus far I was perfectly satisfied of three things : —

1. There was in the box no person except the boys, bound as above described.

2. It was physically impossible for the boys to liberate themselves.

3. There was introduced into the box nothing whatever besides the boys and the ropes with which they were bound.

These being the conditions, the right-hand door was closed; then the left-hand door; and finally the middle door. At the same time the gas-lights were lowered, so that it was twilight in the room. Within ten seconds, two hands were seen by the committee and by the audience, at an opening near the top of the middle door; and one minute after, the doors opened of their own accord, and the boy bound so tightly walked out unbound, the ropes lying on

the floor, every knot being untied. The other boy had not been released; and a careful examination showed every knot and every rope to be in the precise place in which the committee left it.

The doors were closed as before, with nothing in the box besides one of the boys, bound as described, hand and foot, with all the knots beyond the reach of his hands or mouth, and in less than one minute they opened without visible cause, and the boy walked out unbound, every knot being untied.

*b.* The box being again carefully examined, and found to contain nothing but the seats, the boys were placed in them unbound, one seated at one end and one at the other. Between them, on the floor, was thrown a large bundle of ropes, and the doors were then closed. In less than two minutes, they opened as before, and the boys were bound hand and foot in their seats. The committee examined the knots and the arrangements of the ropes, and declared them more securely bound than when they had tied them themselves. I then made a careful examination of the manner in which they were tied, and found as follows; viz., a rope was tightly passed around each wrist, and tied, the hands being behind the back; the ends were then drawn through the holes in the seat, and tied underneath, drawing the hands firmly down on the seat. A second rope was passed several times around both legs, and firmly tied, binding the legs together. A third rope was tied to the legs, and then fastened to the middle of the back side of the box. A fourth rope was also attached to the legs, and drawn backward, and tied to the ropes underneath the seat, which bound the hands. This last rope was so tightened as to take the slack out of the others. Every rope was tight, and no movement of the body could make any rope slacken. They were tied precisely alike. I also examined the precise points where the ropes passed over the wrists, measuring from the pro-

cesses of the radial, ulnar, and metacarpal bones. I also carefully arranged the ends of the ropes in a peculiar manner. This arrangement was out of reach and out of sight of the boys, and unknown to any one but myself. The examination being ended, the following facts were apparent:—

1. There was *no one* in the box with the boys.
2. There was nothing in the box with the boys, except the ropes.

3. It was physically impossible for the boys to have tied themselves, *every one of the knots* being beyond the reach of their hands or mouths, and the boys being *four feet* apart.

4. The time elapsing from the closing of the doors to their opening (less than two minutes by the watch) was altogether too short for any known physical power to have tied the ropes as they were tied.

c. The boys being tied in this manner, one of the committee was requested to shut the doors; he stepped forward, closed the right-hand door, also the left-hand door, and was about closing the middle door, when two hands came out of the box, one of which hit him a severe blow on the right shoulder. The committee-man was partly in the box, and felt the blow, but did not know what struck him. He immediately threw open the doors, but nothing could be found but the boys, tied as before. I carefully re-examined the positions of the ropes, and *found them as I had left them*.

The hands were seen by the audience distinctly. The lights had not been turned down, and the hands were in the plain gas-light, and remained in sight several seconds. Having satisfied myself of the reality of the hands, having seen the blow given by one of them, which was sufficient to turn the committee-man partly round, I examined them with reference to their position in relation to the boys, anatomically considered. The middle door had not been closed,

and the committee-man had not left the box; both boys were firmly tied to their seats, and the gas was fully lighted. The hand that appeared to the left of the committee-man might have been, *so far as place and anatomical relation was concerned, the right hand of the boy at the left side of the box*; but the hand that struck the man could not have belonged to either boy. It was more than four feet from either one, and at least two feet too high; and, had either body been sufficiently near, *it must have been a right hand on a left arm!*

*d.* The box was then carefully examined again, and nothing could be found, except the boys, bound as described before. There was then placed on the floor, between the boys, a bell, a violin, a guitar, a tambourine, and a trumpet. This being done, the left door was closed, then the right door, and as the committee-man was closing the middle door, the brass trumpet, weighing about two pounds, jumped up from the floor, struck the top of the box with great force, and fell out on the floor. This took place while the committee-man stood facing the box. The door was wide open, and the committee-man stood partly in the box. The boys were again carefully examined, and found to be tied as at first. I examined the ropes that I had carefully and privately arranged, as before described, and found them as I had left them.

*e.* The trumpet was placed back, and all the doors closed. Within ten seconds, the violin was tuned and began to play: at the same time the guitar, tambourine, and bell began to play; all joining in the same tune. Part of the time, the bell was thrust out of the window in the upper part of the middle door by an arm, and played in sight of the audience. While the music was being made, there were a multitude of raps, both light and heavy, on all parts of the box. The first tune was played and repeated, and a few seconds of comparative quiet followed, broken only by the instruments

jumping about the box, and a few raps. Soon a second tune was begun, in which all the instruments joined as before. In the midst of this tune, the doors suddenly opened themselves, and the instruments tumbled about, some one way, some another, and part fell on the floor. The time between the stopping of the music and the opening of the door was not a single second; and I went at once to the box, and found both boys bound, hand and foot, as I had left them. I examined the ropes, particularly around the wrists, and found them in the precise position in which I had left them, measuring from the processes of the radial, ulnar, and metacarpal bones. I also found the ends of the ropes under the seats, which I had, as previously described, privately arranged in a peculiar manner, in precisely the same position as I had left them.

Inferences: 1. There was no one in the box with the boys.

2. Nothing was in the box except the boys, bound, and the instruments.

3. The boys could not untie themselves.

4. The boys could not have been untied, as the position of the ropes could not have been retained; having been privately arranged by myself, out of their sight and reach.

5. The time between the playing of the instruments and the opening of the doors was totally insufficient for the boys, had they been untied, to have tied themselves, it being but a *second*.

6. The boys could not have tied themselves, all the knots being beyond their reach.

*f.* The boys being tied as before, I got into the box, and seated myself on the back seat between them. I then placed my right hand on the legs, just above the knees, of the boy at my right, and my left hand, in a similar way, on the legs of the boy at my left side. My hands were then bound to them with ropes. They were placed in such a manner that

I could detect distinctly any movement of the superficial muscles of the thighs of both boys. I did this for the purpose of ascertaining whether the body of either boy moved.

After being thus tied, the committee carefully examined the box, and found nothing in it except the two boys and myself, bound. The instruments before named were then placed in the box beside my feet; the violin being in my lap. In this position, the doors were closed. Instantly loud raps were heard; and within two seconds after the closing of the door, and while we were all still, and not a muscle of either limb, as I could perceive, moved, I felt fingers passing all over my head and face. It could not have been imagination, as the fingers took hold of my cravat, unfastened it, and took it off my neck as carefully as I could have done. One of the boys spoke to me, and said, "Will you request the instruments to play?" I asked, "Do you mean me?" He replied, "Yes." I then said, "Will the violin play?" Instantly the violin raised up from my lap, before my face, and began to play. It was out of reach of the boys. The boy at the left then said, "Will you notice the order in which the instruments move?" I replied, "I will." He then said, "Go gently. Will the violin go to the top of the box?" Instantly the violin, still playing, went to the top of the box, at least two feet beyond our reach, all the while playing. The guitar was at the same time playing at my side. While the violin was moving about, playing over our heads, the boy at the left said, "Will the spirit strike the stranger with the instrument gently on the head?" The boy at the right said, "Strike gently: don't strike hard." Instantly the tambourine came up in front of me, tapped one cheek, then the other, then the top of my head, and, as quick as thought, struck the right-hand boy a tremendous blow on the top of the head. He cried out, as any one would, hurt by a sudden, unexpected blow,

“Oh!” The trumpet then moved on the floor to the front of the box, and up the side, out of our reach, to the top of the box, then sailed around with the violin, at least two feet above our reach. The tambourine came upon my left, and balanced itself on the top of my head: at the same time hands were passing over my face, head, and sides. At this point, the doors suddenly opened. The violin and trumpet dropped from the top of the box, and the tambourine fell from my head. During all this time, I did not move; neither did the boys, as far as I could perceive.

I know that it was impossible for them to have moved their hands from behind their backs without my noticing it.

I know they did not rise from their seats.

I know that there were not hands or fingers enough to have played the guitar, violin, and tambourine, and passed over my face and body, as they did, at the same time, *had both the boys been untied.*

Had it been the hands of the boys on my face, they could not have had time to have replaced them and tied the ropes before the doors were opened. Such quick and violent motions of the boys must have caused perceptible motion of the legs; but I know they were perfectly still during the whole time I was bound to them.

When I was untied, I again examined the ends of the ropes, which I had previously adjusted as before described, and found them as I had left them at first.

The instruments were then taken out, and nothing was left in the box but the boys, bound as described. The doors were closed; and, in less than *one minute*, they opened, and the boys walked out, every knot being untied. This closed the performance.

But, in order that this paper may be correctly understood, it is proper to make the following statements:—

1. I am a disbeliever in spiritualism.
2. I could see nothing in the phenomena above described



that was *indicative* of spiritual or intellectual power, or force beyond that of the boys.

3. I never spoke to the Davenport brothers before, nor have I spoken to them since.

4. I have written this as an account of phenomena which I have witnessed, as correctly as I am capable of doing, precisely as I would describe any other phenomena.

5. I endeavored to be critical in my observations, that they might be valuable, and, for the same reason, accurate in the expression of them in this paper.

6. I felt, during the exhibition, that the phenomena were produced by the means of a power with which I was unacquainted.

7. I was not at all impressed with the idea that this new force was under the control or direction of a spiritual presence, but fully under control of the minds of the boys.

8. I did not make the examination for the purpose of sustaining any theory, or for curiosity, but for the express purpose of accurately noting the phenomena that occurred.

9. I am acquainted with the general methods of sleight-of-hand performers, and am perfectly satisfied that these phenomena must be accounted for in some other way.

10. I cannot believe that deception was used. As far as I could perceive, the phenomena were real, and must be accounted for through the agency of a new force.

11. If the human mind is competent to give evidence of observed phenomena, then the above statements may be relied on as correct.

(Signed)

S. L. LOOMIS.

This speaks for itself; and all comment on the writer's part is wholly unnecessary.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

ON the twenty-second day of February, 1862, in Adrian, Mich., Ira Davenport led to the altar Augusta Green, daughter of the Mrs. Green mentioned in our first chapter.

Their union was a happy but brief one; for her death resulted in consequence of child-birth.

The husband and wife were both apprised of what the result would be, long before it occurred; and both saw it in visions of the night. On one occasion, the lady saw her deceased father enter the room where she sat, and place a coffin by her side. Then he left the room, but returned again, bringing a smaller one. The vision affected her greatly, and she abandoned all hope of surviving the fearful ordeal then awaiting her. She felt that she must die, and she died, but in the absolute certainty of renewed life on the farther shore.

One day, she sat sewing in the room, her husband being present, and her mind evidently pre-occupied with her impending dissolution, when she started abruptly, and, looking at the narrow passage leading from the apartment, exclaimed, "They can never get my coffin through that entry; but they will try to, and before long." She then made all needful preparations for her grave and funeral, and shortly thereafter joined the blessed throng who joyfully, gladly waited her coming.

The souls of mother and child went to the spirit-land together. True spiritualists have not mere *hopes* of the safety and happiness of the dead: *they know it*. They are certain of again meeting their loved ones, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest, — in that glorious land beyond the darksome river, the glowing, sun-bright clime.

Have ye heard, have ye heard of the sun-bright clime,  
Unstained by sorrow, unhurt by time,  
Where age hath no power o'er the fadeless frame;  
Where the heart is fire, and the eye is flame?  
Have ye heard of that sun-bright clime?

Crystalline waters are gushing there,  
And beings of beauty, strangely fair;  
And a thousand seraphs are hovering o'er  
The dazzling wave and the golden shore  
In that beautiful, sun-bright clime.

There are myriad angel forms, in white,  
Beings of beauty, clothed in light,  
Who dwell in their immortal bowers,  
'Mid the countless hues of myriad flowers,  
Which bloom in that sun-bright clime.

And there is a city, whose name is Light,  
And the diamond's ray, and the ruby bright,  
And ensigns wave, and banners unfurl,  
O'er topaz walls and gates of pearl  
In that gem-hued, sun-bright clime.

Earth hath not heard, and eye hath not seen,  
Its songs of joy, or its radiant sheen;  
For its lamps of light, and its harps of gold,  
And its crowns of glory, can never grow old,  
Nor fade in that sun-bright clime.

But far away, in that sinless clime,  
Unstained by sorrow, unhurt by time,  
'Tis where the song of the seraphs swell,  
Where the radiant sons of glory dwell,  
Where justice and love to man are given:—  
The home of the soul, the blessed heaven,  
Is the name of that sun-bright clime.

And in that heaven, serene and beautiful, dwells the pure,  
sweet soul of Augusta Davenport: by and by we all shall  
join her.

In 1863, the Davenports received invitations to visit the  
town of Richmond, Ind., a place remarkable, among other

things, for the persistence with which many of its citizens bullied spiritual itinerants, whether lecturers or test mediums. It was a common saying, that a minister might as well attempt to preach in hell, as for any spiritualist to ply his vocation in Richmond. Now, if there be a hell, the writer certainly hopes that ministers, above all others, go there, to preach deliverance to and for the suffering souls: but the hope is futile, there being no such place, according to those who ought to know, — dead men returned to relate their experience. But supposing that such a place existed, and that it needs the services of gospel preachers: it stood no more in need of such than Richmond did of a medium to teach the people that even they had imperishable souls. So thought the Davenports, else they had not gone thither; for they never go to a place, no matter what the pecuniary interest may be, except they go as missionaries of the great truth they were commissioned to demonstrate.

In consequence of the spirit of persecution existing in that place, very few mediums ever had sufficient courage to open there, either as lecturers or demonstrators; but the few who did almost invariably suffered themselves to be disgracefully driven off, whereat the barbarian element of the town stuck out its tongue, and brayed like an ass, and the civilized portion grieved, but suffered the other to have its way, without so much as even a whining protest.

No sooner had the Davenports reached this place than the barbaric crowd took alarm, and told them to "leave town;" but this time they were mistaken in their men. The Davenports failed to see the utility of marching up the hill, and marching down again; and so they not only flatly refused to leave, but announced their *séances* as in all other places; whereat church mobites waxed exceedingly wroth, and swore they would do this and that, and raise a row, and break things generally; to all of which the Davenports listened, and laughed.

Not satisfied with threats, the mob sent a delegation to the Davenports, to notify them, that, if they were spiritual mediums, they (the mob) demanded the most unequivocal proofs of that fact, and themselves would dictate what said proofs should be. If the spirits could defy the law of gravitation, and move one wooden structure, as a stand, table, or chair, why couldn't they move another wooden structure, such as a bridge, a barn, or a house? that's what they wanted to know: and if the Davenports wouldn't gratify them, and perform such things as they dictated, woe be unto them! Furthermore, they said that they did not intend to propose tests like those suggested, but far more difficult ones, refusing point blank to specify what such tests were to be.

Finding what sort of material they had to deal with, the mediums declined further interviews; and the Richmondites left the hotel, vowing all sorts of vengeance. And, in consequence, they found it next to impossible to get a hall, and even then not under four days. Accordingly, they went to another town for that length of time, and returned at its expiration. The hall was secured. Meantime, the roughs had fully organized to destroy them.

Rumor had been busy with her thousand tongues, causing an excitement which resulted in packing the hall long before the time to begin, hundreds being unable to obtain even standing room.

When a committee was called for, the leaders of the rabble were elected at once, and therefore the "packing" was complete. But, having only truth to defend, the Davenports consented even to that arrangement, albeit they had some misgivings as to their personal safety in the midst of such a villanously-disposed crowd; especially as the committee came on the stage with great bluster, bringing with them three or four armsfull of the queerest-looking miscellanea they had ever been greeted with, consisting of

hand-cuffs, leg-chains, wire, ropes, tarred twine, fish-lines, gags, iron bars, bags, bed-cords, clothes-lines, and even an ox-chain, wherewith it was proposed to load them, but which, of course, they declined to submit to, the intended foul play being altogether too apparent.

“You must submit,” said the head fellow, “or else” —

“What?” observed William.

“We’ll” (he meant “maul you,” but said) “refuse to serve.”

“Resign, then,” said William; “for we never will consent to be used in the manner you propose.”

Hereupon, a dreadful rumpus ensued; the audience, with a terrific yell, swearing that the committee should *not* resign, and that the mediums should submit.

Ira’s good sense at that moment served him capitally. He went to a chair near by, procured one of their notices that lay there, as if by chance, and, reading aloud the advertisement, expressed their entire willingness to comply with the terms of its requirements. He said that himself and brother were entitled to that privilege, and by law and reason were exempt from any thing else. They were there, ready to go on upon such terms; and all dissatisfied persons were at liberty to retire, and would receive their admission-fee from the agent, at the door, as they passed out.

But not a man chose to leave the hall; all of which had been foreseen by the mob, some of whom were called lawyers, and had been provided for.

Two men now came forward, and volunteered to serve as a tying committee. Being accepted, they proceeded to their business, spent forty-four minutes in their task, and finished by daubing creosote over every knot that they tied. This was for the purpose of detecting, by the odor on the hands of the young men, whether they untied themselves or not.

All being ready, the doors of the cabinet were closed, and

the usual manifestations instantly began, and continued for a length of time, and with a fervor and power that elicited the wildest and most uproarious applause, even from the bitterest enemies the subject had in the house.

After the doors were thrown open, the ropes and the men's hands were examined; but no odor of creosote was found upon the latter: at the announcement of which the house again came down with cheers and applause, which being ended, more rope was tied around the mediums, the cabinet was shut again, and again the manifestations went on, even stronger than before.

The committee acknowledged themselves to have been fairly beaten: they declared that the men could not possibly have done what had been done, and that there was a mystery about the whole affair to them utterly inexplicable.

To the majority of the audience this was quite satisfactory; but a few, who had openly boasted that they knew how it was all done, finding their folly so finely demonstrated, sought to regain their ruined prestige by creating a disturbance. They demanded their fees back, and the mean cupidity of the rest (with honorable exceptions) soon swelled their numbers; and, seeing that the Davenports (who they well knew had the law and right in their favor) did not seem disposed to refund what they had fairly and honorably earned, they began a row, which would have eternally disgraced any other place but Richmond.

They swore, by green and blue, that they'd either have their money, or the heart's blood of G. S. Lacy, Davenport's agent; and not a few declared they'd have both. It soon became evident that the boast and threat were in solid earnest, and that blood was likely to be spilt that night in the hall. True, there were peace-officers present; but they were deeper in the mud, if possible, than the scoundrels who created the disturbance.

As soon as it was clearly understood that the mediums

were not to be frightened before they were hurt, the mob made a rush for the stage, while the timid ones made a contrary one towards the door of egress.

In an instant, the Davenports were surrounded by an infuriated mob, with drawn weapons, — pistols, knives, and bludgeons, — all yelling like fiends, and swearing that death was their portion, sure.

The lights were suddenly turned down ; and a burly ruffian aimed a blow at where Ira had stood half a second before ; but, instead of striking him, the fellow's fist landed just behind the ear of one of his own gang, who had made a dash at the same intended victim.

Poor fellow ! he will never recover from that visitation. He had precious little sense before it, and a great deal less after his friend's salute. Ira had divined the intention, and made sure his retreat.

The elder Davenport, anxious to save his sons, ran and turned on the gas, and then rushed, club in hand, to where they were standing : and well was it for the Richmond bullies that they stood back from those three brave men ; for death was in their right hands, and flashed in their eyes. The mob saw this, and wisely stayed their attack.

During the brief time that the lights were out, a free fight had been going on in the body of the hall, attended with no little pocket-picking and watch-snatching ; and, when the light came again, the mob were not only attacking the cabinet, but some of them were engaged in carrying off the maimed and injured.

The three Davenports were now thoroughly worked up. They could no longer stand quietly by and see their property wantonly destroyed ; and, therefore, led by the indomitable Ira, they rushed for the cabinet, and drove away the ruffians. One fellow, who had run against Ira's fist, was nearly half a minute recovering himself sufficiently to inquire if the "*storm was over, and if the lightning*



*had struck anybody else besides him.*" Such, at least, was the story told of him next day by his own friends, of whom it is said, he inquired.

Up to this moment, and so long as only the Davenports were endangered, the officers had winked at the violence; but, when they saw that they meant to defend their lives and property at all hazards, things began to look serious, and they came forward to quell it, as by this time, also, had several of the respectable citizens of the place, who ranged themselves beside the Davenports, and bade the crowd look out for themselves.

Thus re-enforced, the Davenports marched through the hall, and went into the street, and the police grew brave in exact proportion as the danger decreased: so that in five minutes after the hall row was over, a more courageous set of men was never seen.

The troop had proceeded about thirty yards from the hall, in the midst of a dense crowd, all yelling like so many wild animals at dinner-time, when a great strapping fellow assaulted Lacy, and would have inflicted some fearful injury, had it not been that he stumbled over Ira's right leg, and run his nose plump against Ira's fist at the same time, which caused him to occupy his time in picking himself out of the gutter, where his accidents had laid him.

The comrades of the fellow attempted a rush, but stopped short when they saw Ira's right hand going into the left breast-pocket of his coat; whereupon one said to the other that it "wasn't worth while" — and it wasn't.

The elder brother was conducted to a friend's house close by; and all would have passed off quietly but for his own indiscretion. Nothing would do but he must perch himself up at a window to see what was going on below; and, while so doing, a portion of the mob, who had recently been fortified with whiskey, saw him, and, forthwith, tar and feathers were the next things on the programme. A bucket

of the first was produced, and a bed of the last was impressed immediately. Then came ropes and a gang of fools, swearing they meant to tie the Davenports' necks this time, instead of their hands.

The young man wanted to stay and brave it out; but his friend, at whose house he was, rightly refused to listen to the idea, and almost forced him to go with him to a place of safety, much, very much, against his will; for his blood was up, and he wanted to maintain his own unquestionable rights in his own proper person, with his own right hand.

Finding themselves foiled again, the mob went to hard drinking, and made night hideous with their unearthly noises; and the clock struck three before it had exhausted its drunken spleen, and dispersed.

Next day, the excitement was resumed; for want of better amusement, the roughs fighting among themselves. The Davenports ventured abroad, and, as they expected would be the case, were arrested on the charge of swindling; for one of the unwashed ones had made an affidavit that they had swindled him out of twenty-five cents, lawful currency of the United States, which he had been induced to pay in order to gain admission to a hall where he had been told there were to be spiritual manifestations; that he had gone thither, but had not seen so much as half a spirit (he had only seen ten or a dozen spirit hands and arms; whereas he expected to have beheld something different). True, he had seen portions of several spirits, but did not think he had beheld twenty-five cents' worth; he had carefully examined the box, but had been unable to find the body of even one spirit, although a hand not attached to any corpse had rapped him soundly over the head; and he now prayed the court to either compel the Davenports to exhibit to him a ghost in regular showman style, or to refund the aforesaid five and twenty cents, legal tender, United-States currency, which favor being granted, that petitioner would ever pray, — just as if the fellow had ever prayed in his whole life!

The justice said he had heard some of the tallest kind of Indiana swearing, but that affidavit was a little taller than he had ever heard before. Nevertheless, as he wanted the fellow's vote thereafter, he granted the warrant sought. The parties were arrested, appeared, and gave bonds to answer the charge.

Shortly thereafter, the grand jury met, the bill was ignored, the Davenports' lawyers tried to quash the proceedings, and they succeeded: they were honorably discharged; and the third act of the farce began. The time occupied by their counsel had been considerably less than one hour; nevertheless, they saddled them with a bill of a hundred dollars, which, being a barefaced attempt at extortion, was rightfully rejected; whereupon, the cormorants sued for what they called their fees, which suit was garnished by even "taller" swearing than the other.

Speaking of the *first* suit, a Richmond editor writes as follows in his journal:—

"The Davenport boys gave one of their entertainments at Jones's Hall, on Tuesday evening. However the phenomena they exhibit may be produced, they are certainly not a little remarkable. It will be recollected that the Davenport boys gave some of their peculiar entertainments last spring at Richmond. They created quite a *furor* among the singularly excitable citizens of the staid Quaker city, partly in their favor, and partly against them. The dissatisfied ones at last resorted almost to mob violence, broke up the last meeting, and finally resorted to the sage procedure of a legal prosecution. The Davenports were recognized in a large sum to appear at the present term of our Court. They were on hand accordingly. The grand jury have had their case before them, and have found no cause for a criminal prosecution. The Davenports came off with flying colors, as every cool, thinking man must have foreseen, from the beginning, that they would. The idea of prosecuting

every exhibition of this kind that might fail to come up to the expectations of all was supremely ridiculous, and exhibited a 'verdancy' as extraordinary as it was refreshing in a city of the size and pretensions of Richmond. Totally irrespective of the merits or demerits of their exhibitions, every sensible man will pronounce their discharge by the grand jury rational and righteous.

"Since writing the above, we learn the Davenports have been served with a writ on account of their refusal to pay what they deemed an exorbitant attorney's fee of a hundred dollars, for services at their preliminary trial at Richmond. We learn they are also to be prosecuted for violating our county ordinance against exhibiting without license. There seems to be a disposition to "put them through" with many, apparently out of spite, because they cannot understand how they do the things that are done in their presence. Let them have credit and fair play at least. No occasion for wrath or persecution."

The lawyers attempted to seize their cabinet and other property; but their greed had been anticipated and provided against. They swore their services were worth a hundred dollars, or four times as much as the Davenports offered to pay, but in the end were compelled to accept less than one-half of that identical offer: and they found out that in law, as in physics, the Davenports were protected by a power altogether too formidable in its resources to be successfully withstood by them or any one else; because against a few men's puny attempts to subvert the grandest truth of the age, stands arrayed in solid phalanx the united myriads of disembodied men and women of all ages, races, continents, and of all the starry islands floating in the vast ethereal ocean around and about us,—the amazing and uncountable hosts of the vast and mighty univercœlum.

## CHAPTER XIX.

THE queerest theories imaginable have been invented to account for the phenomenal occurrences that everywhere attend the Davenport's, without admitting the only rational one existing, — the spiritual.

A copy of "The Montreal Herald," of June 24, 1864, now lies on the table before the writer, which, among other things, contains an item well worth notice. We quote it:—

"The Davenport brothers performed last night, to a large audience, at the Bonaventure Hall, startling those present by many singular manifestations, brought about, it is to be hoped, rather through skilful mechanical contrivances than by any unseen influence of a more doubtful character."

"Doubtful!" Does the man think the Devil himself is running round loose? — beg pardon, does he think his diabolic majesty has been impressed into service by a couple of young gentlemen? If so, what are the motives governing him? Has he contracted to serve them faithfully, for, say, twenty-five years? At what salary? The Devil has no need of gold, and probably despises greenbacks! What, then, are the terms for all this handiwork! "A couple of souls," say you? What! has the Devil lost his senses, and turned fool outright? Does he deem it a paying operation to come and go at the call of two young fellows for a quarter of a century, for the sake of a couple of souls, when he can have as many lawyers, legislators, cabinet-officers, generals, editors, parsons, and shoddy aristocrats, not only for the asking, but absolutely forced upon his satanic hands? Nonsense! The Devil, if alive, would have better sense; but, being dead long ago, why, of course, *that* hypothesis must be dropped; for people are getting too sensible in these days, to believe that the God of the universe permits the exercise

of a power almost equal to his own in antagonism to himself. No, the idea is exploded; and the Devil turns out to be a myth, after all.

Just think of imprisoning and persecuting a man because he has the ability to demonstrate the complainant's most perplexing question, and one that involves his own best interests, and that, too, in favor of the objector! And yet, for doing this very thing, the Davenports have been subjected to all but a death by torture. They have been threatened, mobbed, assaulted, waylaid, shot at, and thrown into prison; and all for proving that the human race were not like perishing beasts of the forest.

For doing this needful work, they were arrested in Mexico, N.Y., thrown into jails like common felons, tried, and found guilty — of what? Why, of proving God to be true, Jesus Christ the eternal friend of the species, and immortality the God-given heritage of the entire race. That was the sum of their offending, and nothing more.

The trial in Mexico was so clearly brought about by malice, that, judicially, it resulted in a fine of six cents against the Davenports, and thirty dollars against Rand their agent, who forthwith appealed to a higher tribunal.

They left Mexico, and went to a place called Phoenix, where, in their own hired hall, they proposed to give *private* and select *séances*. Rand says, —

“We were again arrested, under pretence that we had violated their village ordinance, which provides that persons shall obtain license for the exhibition of shows, circuses, menageries, &c. We had nothing of the kind to exhibit, and never thought of a license, the mediums having never had any thing of the kind in all their travels; but it was when we were there convened in our own hired private room, that an officer, with some thirty men, burst open our door, and arrested us. Emboldened by the mad efforts of their coadjutors in Mexico, they, with far weaker pretences

of any wrong on our part, after committing the outrage upon the private and unoffending party to which I have referred, and breaking up the interview (which was the real design) for the evening, — these legal bigots and persecutors, with fiendish exultation, conducted us away to the hall, or room, where we were to be again tried. As we had been so effectually robbed in Mexico, and could get no justice at the hands of those who were swayed wholly by religious animosity and prejudice, we concluded to defend ourselves in the trial by simply asserting the facts in the case, and allow the law (since we could not resist its process), as construed by our pursuers, to have its course.

“As had been predetermined by our adversaries, we were again fined: they would have us pay thirteen dollars and thirty-nine cents for holding a private spiritual circle, the object of which was to propagate our religious principles and opinions. As we had been directed, both in this place and at Mexico, by the spirits, not to pay money for our religious liberty, but to test the principle at once by giving ourselves up to imprisonment, if the authorities demanded it, we resolved on allowing them to take their own course, after clearly stating our business, and all the facts of the case. Accordingly, after an operation which was called, in legal parlance, ‘joining issue,’ this singular and disgraceful meeting was adjourned from the then late hour in the night to the next morning.

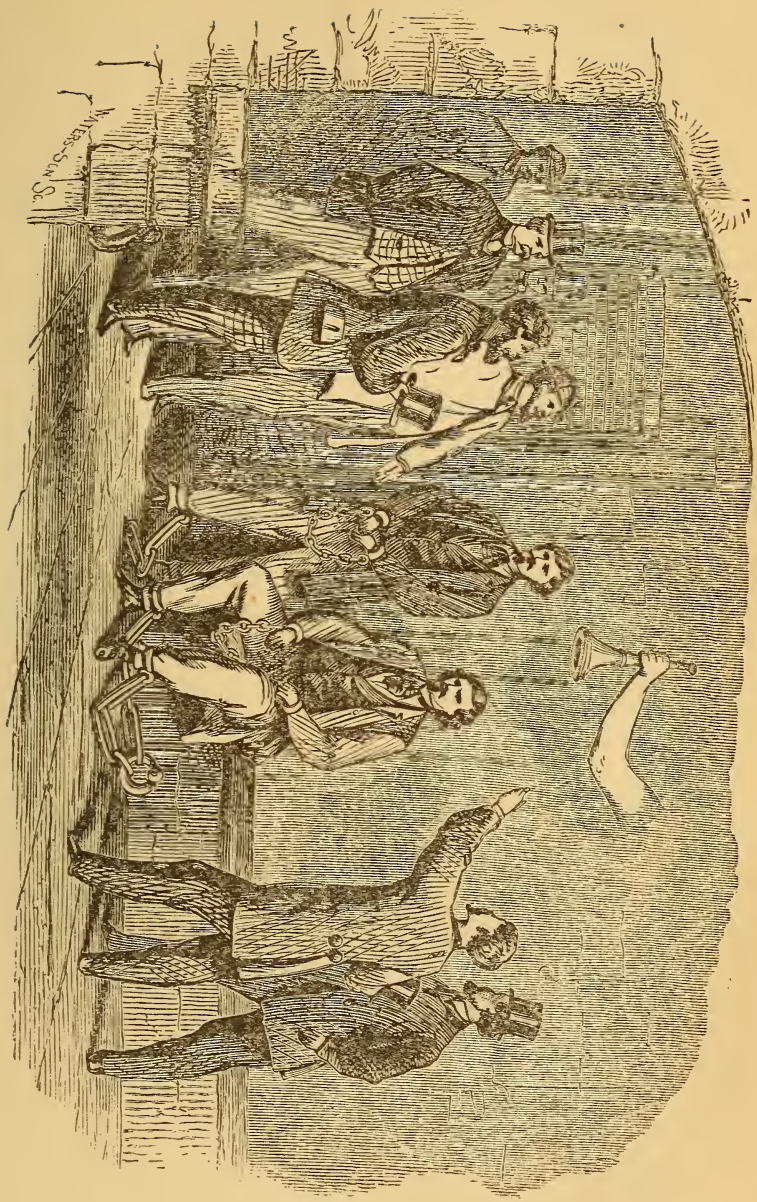
“Having now resolved with my companions that we would not further pay money, though it were the merest paltry farthing, for our religious liberty, we submitted ourselves to the officer, who took us to the common jail in the city of Oswego, N.Y. On the day of our arrival there, a friend called to see us, and invited the jailer to witness a test of spirit-power. The jailer having expressed his willingness to do so, he adjusted iron handcuffs to the boys’ wrists, and made them fast to the iron bars in the door of

the cell. A trumpet furnished for the occasion was then placed back into the cell, beyond the possible reach of the mediums, their hands being fastened in an elevated position by the handcuffs to the iron bars of the cell-door, the boys standing in the cell. The cell was then made dark by a cloth being put up at the bars of the door; then the trumpet was taken from the back part of the cell, where it had just been placed, and brought to the bars of the door, and beaten upon them; and a voice spoke through the trumpet familiarly, holding an intelligent conversation with us who stood without the door of the cell, in relation to the circumstances under which we had come to the jail, stating to R. Briggs, who was present, that he would not have the friends outside get excited as if we were to be let out of the jail immediately; that there was a purpose to be executed in relation to our coming to the prison, and that we were to remain there.

“We asked the jailer what he thought of such a test. ‘Oh! it was a matter for *scientific investigation*,’ said he. A very scientific investigation indeed would it be, which should show that the power that brought the trumpet along to the bars of the cell-door, and then spoke through it, was any other than an intelligent being. The thing was perfect: the jailer did not question it at all. He knew the phenomenon was a verity, and thought it a subject for scientific investigation. So if that same veritable power which brought the trumpet from the back part of the cell, and talked through it, should also slide the bolt of a lock, and let us out of the jail, would it not be a subject for scientific investigation? And would it not also be a very commendable and worthy subject of scientific investigation?

“At evening, the mediums and myself had another interview with the spirit in charge, on the subject of our imprisonment, when we received substantially the same instruction. Time passed on, days and weeks: we often







had communication with spirits on the subject of our confinement and other matters. We held circles when our friends came to see us; the spirits usually talking familiarly with the company, and manifesting themselves in a variety of other ways.

“Time sped. We had much company; and many friends brought us presents in fruits and other nice articles of food. Here we would be glad to mention the names of a long list of friends who repeatedly visited us, and made us glad with their sympathy and repeated presents, if they were not so numerous.

“We were informed by the spirits that our prison-doors would be opened before our time expired; and, on the evening previous to its expiration, a voice spake in the room, and said that I was to go out that night. I was told to put on my coat and hat, and be ready. It was oppressively warm in our small room, with the window and door both closed; and I asked if I could be allowed to sit with my coat off, as I did not expect we should be released for more than an hour; but the answer was, ‘Put on thy coat and hat, and be ready.’ I did so, not even then supposing we should be released until the jailer and his family had retired, and all might be still without; but I was disappointed. Immediately, not probably twenty minutes from the time we were locked up, the door was thrown open, and the voice again spoke, and said, ‘Now go quickly. Take with you the rope (for a rope had been in our room, which had been used for another purpose in our former room), go to yonder garret-window, and let thyself down, and flee from this place. We will take care of the boys. There are many angels present, though but one speaks.’ I hastily passed on, and strictly obeyed the angel. The boys came out with me into the hall, took up the lock which lay upon the floor, and for the first time examining it, spoke of its being warm. The angel told them, as they subsequently

informed me, to go into the room again; and the door was closed and locked again by the angel, and they were to remain there for the night.

“When I went, I expected the mediums would immediately follow me. It by no means occurred to me that the door was again to be locked. I was told by the angel even to leave the rope at the window. I expected, that, when I had successfully made my escape from the building, the boys would be directed to follow me: I did not comprehend at the time that the angels intended to detain the boys for the night. I loitered by the way, supposing it likely my companions might overtake me; and when I arrived at the house of a friend, who kindly arose to receive and shelter me, I joyfully announced that I expected the boys along in a few moments. I sat down and hastily wrote that night to my wife and children in Massachusetts, as that letter will now show, announcing to them that our prison-door had been thrown open, and that I had thus made my escape, and that I expected the boys would soon arrive.”

Says the author of a little pamphlet, before referred to, speaking of this Oswego affair, —

“As the spirits had, by Rand’s release, shown their power to open the prison, but as whoever left it would be liable to be returned for breaking jail, the boys were directed to remain where they were until the following day, when their term of imprisonment expired. Rand returned to Maine.”

Not a few cavillers saw fit to doubt that Rand had really been liberated by spiritual means and power; and, in consequence of their attempts to invalidate his assertions in that regard, the following declaration and affidavit was made and published, which had the effect of silencing these cavillers forever, for oaths like those sworn would have consigned any man charged with homicide to the hangman’s tender mercies: they *did* consign the cavillers to merited contempt.

“Be it known to all people, that in the seventh month, A. D. 1859, we, the undersigned, were imprisoned in the common jail in the city of Oswego, N.Y., on account of propagating our religious principles, through oral and physical representations, and that after twenty-nine days of our confinement, at evening, when we were all in our prison-room together, as we had just been locked in by the jailer, we having truly answered to his call, a voice spoke and said, ‘*Rand, you are to go out of this place this night. Put on your coat and hat; be ready.*’ Immediately the door was thrown open, and the voice again spoke, and said, ‘*Now walk quickly out, and on to the attic window yonder, and let thyself down by a rope, and flee from this place. We will take care of the boys. There are many angels present, though but one speaks.*’ The angelic command was strictly obeyed.

“That this, and all this, did absolutely occur in our presence, we do most solemnly and positively affirm before God and man.

IRA ERASTUS DAVENPORT.

LUKE P. RAND.

“Subscribed and sworn before me this first day of August, 1859. (Signed)

“JAMES BARNES, *Justice of the Peace.*

“Subscribed and sworn before me by William Davenport, this fifth day of August, 1859.

WILLIAM H. H. DAVENPORT.

“H. B. BURT, *Justice of the Peace.*”

Persecution makes us friends, sometimes, where we least expect to find them. So was it with the Davenports, who had not been an hour in jail before the streets around it were filled with sympathizers, many of them skeptics, and not a few of whom cursed their foes bitterly. “What do you want? Do you want to get out?” cried the crowd to

the prisoners. "If you do, by the holy gospel, out you shall come, if the old jail has to be stormed to effect it!" And it is possible, that, had the brothers given the word, the building would have fallen that very hour: even as it was, it required the combined eloquence and persuasive powers of all three of them to prevent the consummation of the crowd's desire, for the place would have been instantly attacked.

Finding that the Davenports would not sanction violence, even in a righteous cause, the people proposed to pay their fines and costs, and thus set them free; but this generous offer was also declined, for the reason that there was a *principle* at stake, and they would not compromise it on any account whatever. The jailer frankly told them that they were the most popular, and, by odds, the most troublesome customers he ever had, and entreated them to pay up, and quit his premises, if only to relieve him. They refused.

Some amusing scenes occurred during their confinement. One day, two wagon-loads of people from the rural districts went to gaze at them, as if they were a fine show. They were admitted to the corridor, and spent an hour peeping through the gratings at these "birds of Paradise," until it became excessively annoying to the aforesaid "birds." Ira at last could stand it no longer, and thereupon, suddenly throwing down the book he was reading, he tried to look as savage as possible, and walked straight toward the grating, as if he meant to go through it; but, long before he reached it, twenty people, men, women, and several children, were picking each other up at the bottom of the stairs, which locality they had reached in the shortest possible space of time, promiscuously tumbling over each other in their eagerness to escape the brimstone clutches of the Devil, as they seemed to regard young Davenport.

This is not the only instance wherein they have been crowned with honors diabolical; for, says the little pamphlet before alluded to, —

“While in New York, the brothers stepped into a broker’s office to get money changed; and while there, an urchin, who had previously seen them, exclaimed, ‘Here are the Davenport brothers!’ The word passed around; and soon the streets were thronged, and egress from the office obstructed.

“Then said the broker to the anxious crowd,  
 Why gaze ye here, all pushing one another?  
 A mirthful wag among them cried aloud,  
 ‘We want to see the Devil and his brother.’”

The same little *brochure* informs its readers, that during their visit to New York, in the spring of 1864, —

“Astonishment and curiosity pervaded the public mind, and blew up the flames of excitement until they reached the city’s political summit; and the common council desired the brothers to hold a *séance* with them. The invitation was accepted; and the council and mayor, selecting their own room, and testing the matter in their own way, admitted the reality of the manifestations.

“As the roughs would not be outdone by the common council, John Morrissey, the pugilist, solicited the Davenports to give a sitting to a company of noted fast characters, in a down-town gambling-house. As the request was accompanied by the fee demanded, an afternoon was given to them, and, although several thousands of dollars changed hands on the result of the experiments, they expressed themselves delighted and confounded by the wonders they had witnessed. The brothers testify to the good behavior of the gamblers, and say, though they resorted to every method to detect fraud, and tied them more skilfully than they were ever tied before, they were subjected to less severe usage than is customary with a company of clergymen and physicians.” Proving that gamblers and roughs have consciences, which is not always the case with committees, even be they “reverends.”

There is a strong likeness between the two young Davenports, — so strong, that, on one occasion, a lady who tenderly regarded one of them spent half an hour in conversation with the brother. She couldn't tell one from the other for quite a length of time, and in speaking of the affair subsequently to a friend, as the Davenports were coming down the street, she remarked, —

“Oh! I do think they are very handsome (a literal fact, by the way), and what a resemblance! They look exactly alike, — *especially the one on this side.*”

They were stopping at the Lindell House, St. Louis, in 1863, when a lady, in passing along the hall, chanced to look into the public parlor, and saw a man there reading a paper. Passing directly on, she ascended the stairs, and at the top encountered, as she supposed, that identical paper-reader. She nearly fainted, but was too much frightened to find time to do so satisfactorily, else did not think of it. She knew it was impossible for the individual in the parlor to have reached the top of the stairs before her, and therefore, rushing into her room, she screamed, in alto, “I've seen a ghost twice!” The lady saw William in the room, and had met Ira on the stairs.

In May, 1864, the Davenports visited New York for the purpose of giving *séances* in the great hall of the Cooper Institute, a room capable of holding four thousand persons. They performed there for eleven consecutive days and nights, and always to audiences that fairly packed the house. The writer has seen all the seats filled, and hundreds standing up, repeatedly.

“The New-York Herald” (whose editor had been favored with private and satisfactory *séances* at his own house), under date of May 4, 1864, contained the following notice: —



## "A NEW ERA IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.—THE DAVENPORT BROTHERS.

"As the world grows older, it grows wiser. Human development has made greater advances in every direction within the past fifty years than during the five thousand years before. Old things are now passing away. Every thing is becoming new. Systems of science, religion, philosophy, government,—all are being revolutionized. We are in a transition state from darkness to light, and every day brings us nearer to the grand new era of the future.

"Here, for example, are the Davenport brothers: they do the most wonderful things, in public and private. Perhaps their performances are more astonishing in a private parlor, where deception seems impossible, than in a public hall, where there may be trickery. These brothers make musical instruments float about the room; they cause spectral arms and hands to become visible and tangible; they raise chairs and tables from the floor to the ceiling; they illuminate the room with balls of blazing fire. While these phenomena are occurring, the brothers remain seated, their hands and feet firmly tied, and incapable of motion, even if any sleight of hand or sleight of foot could suffice to perform such modern miracles. They say that the power to produce such manifestations has been bestowed upon them; and it is, perhaps, the same occult power, differently developed, as that shown in the telegraph and the steam-engine. It may be a physical power, or a mental power, or a moral power, or a combination of them all; but, certainly, it is as yet inexplicable.

"But, when all this is admitted, we come to the question, *Cui bono?* What good is all this? To what does it all amount? In this practical age, that is the inquiry addressed to every thing new: that inquiry gave spiritualism its first rebuff. Tables may tip, and rappings be heard;

but, if the only use of spiritualism is to attract people to public *séances*, the manifestations cannot rank much higher (although they are a thousand times more wonderful) than those of so-called magicians and necromancers."

Says "The New-York Evening Post," a day or two after:—

"The operations of the Davenport brothers, referred to in these columns, have been repeated at Cooper Institute. Judge Whitley of Hoboken, having been appointed inspector on behalf of the meeting, went into the mysterious closet, and, with the Davenports, was tightly bound with cords. The judge says, that, on closing the doors of the closet, the music, which had ceased, was resumed; soft and delicate hands played over his face; and the musical instruments which had been used were piled miscellaneously upon his arms, shoulders, and head. A hand, thrust through an aperture in the door, grasped the inspector's hand, 'imparting a sensation,' he says, 'exceeding that of the most cordial mortal grip.' The party which was bound came forth, it appears, unbound; and the audience was assured by the inspector, 'that neither collusion nor trickery was possible.' The judge was, it seems, completely mystified by the spirits of the Davenports."

Subsequently, "The Herald" published the subjoined account:—

"MORE WONDERFUL MANIFESTATIONS.—THE  
WHEAT-FLOUR TEST, ETC.

"The performances of the Davenport brothers at the Cooper Institute continue to attract general attention and large audiences. Last evening, there was a very full and fashionable house, and the manifestations were unusually satisfactory. This was, undoubtedly, the result, in a great measure, of the good order maintained by the spectators,

almost all of whom were too intelligent to interfere with their own enjoyment by unnecessary vociferation. Those who made the most noise were those whose opinions were of the least consequence.

“At the suggestion of the agent, who said that there had been some talk about wires and electricity, glass tumblers were placed under the feet of the stools upon which stands the magic cabinet, or closet. The closet was carefully examined, inside and out, and was found to contain nothing, and to have no visible connection with any apparatus. The Davenport brothers (two very intelligent and gentlemanly persons) then came forward, and were warmly welcomed. These gentlemen were securely tied, hand and foot, by the committee, and fastened to the seats in the closet. The committee reported themselves perfectly satisfied thus far; and certainly we have never seen better tying than that accomplished by the fire-marshal. The lights were turned down, and a half-dozen musical instruments (a guitar, banjo, tambourine, violin, trumpet, and bell) were placed in the closet by the committee. The two side-doors of the cabinet were closed and locked also by the Messrs. Baker; then the centre door was pushed to; and in less than a second it was bolted upon the inside, and the trumpet thrown violently out of the hole in the door. The committee rushed to the closet, the lights were turned up, and there sat the Davenports, bound as before. The astonishment of the audience may be imagined; and those who were skeptics a moment before now began to doubt their own conclusions, and joined in the general applause.

“The manifestations then followed in the regular order; the audience remaining very quiet, and watching every thing critically and intelligently. The committee seemed to be extremely impartial, and briefly reported the results of the examinations. A full chorus of instruments, playing a jig, was heard inside the closet. The doors were hastily

opened, and the Davenports had not moved. Spectral hands and arms appeared at the closet window. The doors were opened, and the Davenports were still bound. While the doors were partly open, the instruments were flung out; and a hand was seen to strike fire-marshal Baker. Still the Davenports were tied. Then, the doors being closed for three minutes, the brothers were discovered perfectly unbound. In four minutes more, they were bound again, better than the committee could have bound them, as these gentlemen candidly acknowledged. Then Judge Baker entered the closet, and sat between the Davenports. The doors were shut, the manifestations continued, and, when the lights were again turned up, the judge was revealed with a tambourine on his head, and reported that the Davenports had not moved a muscle. The fire-marshal then tried the same experiment, and made the same report. All the manifestations were repeated several times, to satisfy the most distrustful. It was especially noted, that, in every case, the inside bolt of the centre-door was heard to shoot into its socket in less than a second after the door was closed. This destroyed the theory that the Davenports untie themselves.

“By way of finale, the agent suggested that wheat-flour should be placed in the hands of the Messrs. Davenports, while they were still tightly tied. This was accordingly done by the committee, and any of the flour that had fallen within the box during the operation was neatly brushed away. The doors were then closed for the last time, and still the manifestations continued. Noises were heard; an open hand was shown at the window, and the trumpet was thrown out. The doors were opened, and there stood the Davenport brothers, unbound, and holding the wheat-flour in their hands. The committee failed to find any of the flour about the closet or upon the clothes of the Davenports; and yet they could not have avoided spilling some of it,

had they unclosed their hands ever so little. For such wonders, and for those performed in the room above, the hypothesis of legerdemain or jugglery does not seem a reasonable explanation. No modern juggler has ever performed such deceptions, if they are deceptions; and, during the many years that the Davenports have appeared in public, no one (not even the professors of Harvard College) has detected them in their 'impositions,' as some people call the manifestations. The Davenports, although they are spiritualists, we believe, do not announce that these phenomena are spiritual. They simply produce the manifestations, and ask others to explain them, reserving their own theory, whatever it may be, as their private property."

Said "The New-York World," of their first *séance*, —

"The Davenport brothers, known throughout the country as spiritual mediums, or by unbelievers as sleight-of-hand performers, appeared last evening at the Cooper Institute; and it was announced by advertisement that startling wonders, mysterious displays, and unaccountable manifestations, would take place in their presence. The fame of their feats of *diablerie* had preceded them; and the large hall was crowded with an assemblage, composed of spiritualists and many well-known and respected citizens. There were a great many men with long hair noticeable. The concourse of mediums was immense, larger, perhaps, than was ever witnessed in this city before; enough, indeed, it would have seemed, to call up all the spirits of the vasty deep, and to have almost depopulated the world of the departed.

"Upon the centre of the platform a plain closet, with three doors opening in front, from six to eight feet broad, and eight to ten feet high, and two to three feet through, was placed upon three stools, with four legs each. The closet was entirely disconnected from either the platform below, or the column behind, which it did not touch.

"A piano stood on one side, and a commonplace looking

man played upon a cornet, a boy on a fiddle, and an eccentric looking man with long hair on the piano.

“At eight o'clock, the musicians retired, and the agent appeared on the platform.

“He made a few remarks, in which he said that they did not come there to force any religion or philosophy on the audience, but simply to show them a series of mysterious and wonderful manifestations, for which they could account as they thought proper. They did not claim that these two young men, the Messrs. Davenport, were so much smarter than all other magicians who had ever existed that they performed wonders which baffled all investigation, but simply that they acted as the galvanic battery to the telegraph operator; that they were the mediums through whom external forces accomplished marvellous manifestations. One of the conditions necessary to this was darkness; and therefore this closet was used so that the young men might be in the dark, and yet the manifestations might be witnessed by the audience.

“He desired that a committee of two should be chosen by the audience to examine all the manifestations, and see if there was any deception. The name of Peter Cooper [applause] had been handed to him. Was Mr. Cooper present?

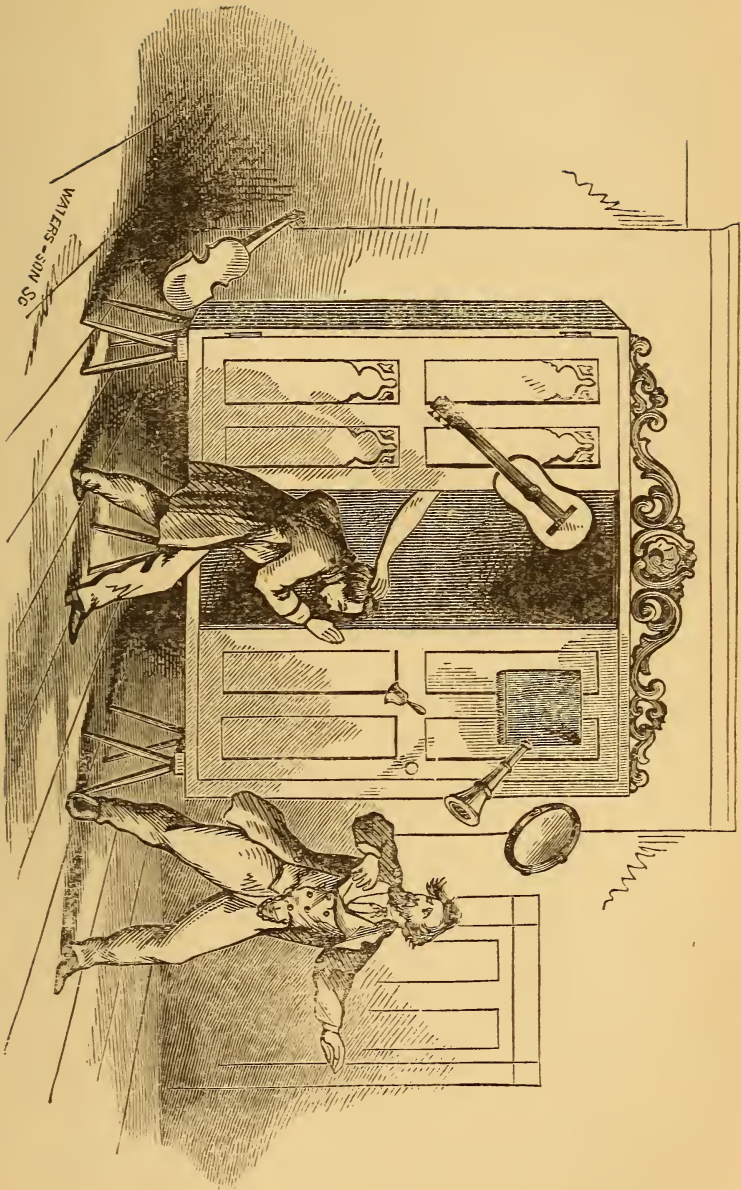
“Neither Mr. Cooper nor his spirit answered.

“A number of other names were proposed. A. J. Spooner, William M. Connolly, Moses Ballou, David Tyler, Mr. Murphy, &c.

“A gentleman in the audience:—‘Horace Greeley!’ Loud calls and hoots. ‘Greeley!’ ‘Greeley!’ ‘Bring up the philosopher!’

“Mr. Greeley did not respond.

“Finally, by vote of the audience, Col. Olcott and Rev. G. T. Flanders were selected as the committee. Col. Olcott is a candid and intelligent gentleman, well known to many



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citizens. Rev. Mr. Flanders is the present pastor of the Second Universalist Church, which meets in the hall of the Historical Society building; and is well known to the public as an eloquent preacher; and is respected in the community as a candid, educated, and unimpeachable gentleman. He came to the platform with much reluctance, and after many calls.

“These gentlemen then examined the closet in every part. The doors being thrown open, two seats were discovered, one on either side. The doors being shut, an opening of less than a foot square, in the shape of a diamond, remained near the top. The closet was pronounced simply a plain affair, with no springs, traps, or machinery in any part; and the seats were securely fastened. The carefulness of the gentlemen in looking under and over, and inside and around the cabinet, excited considerable laughter, but gave satisfaction. The Davenport brothers now appeared on the platform. They looked remarkably like each other; both quite handsome, and between twenty-five and thirty years old, with rather long, curly, black hair, broad, but not high foreheads, dark, keen eyes, heavy eyebrows, mustache and ‘goatee,’ firm-set lips, muscular though well-proportioned frames. They were dressed in black, with dress-coats, one wearing a watch-chain.

“The committee examine them, they in the closet, one on each side; and the committee are a considerable time in tying them in every possible way with small ropes. Their hands are bound behind them; their feet bound together around the ankles, below and above the knee. They are tied to the sides of the closet so that they cannot stand up; and Col. Olcott also ties his man about the waist.

“Mr. Flanders stated for himself and his colleague that these gentlemen were tied in the most complicated manner possible. With respect to those he had tied, he would defy any man to untie the snarl and complication of knots in

half an hour. He would state that he had never witnessed performances of this character before, and had no opinion in regard to them. He was not accustomed to make up his mind either for or against any thing he knew nothing about. He had never seen these two gentlemen (the Dav-enports) that he was aware of, and had only heard of them by rumors through the newspapers, which were, many of them, unfavorable.

“A gentleman in the audience said a friend of his, acquainted with tying knots, would like to see if the men were tied securely. The tyer of knots examined the brothers carefully.

“A VOICE. — ‘What does the professor say?’

“TYER OF KNOTS. — ‘I have nothing to say.’

“A VOICE. — ‘Then, don’t say any thing.’ (Cries, ‘Let him speak!’ ‘Dry up!’ ‘Order!’)

“TYER OF KNOTS. — ‘The knots seem to be sufficiently complicated; at any rate, they are professionally well done as an expert can do them.’

“The gas was partially shut off; not, however, but that every thing was plainly visible. A bell, trumpet, guitar, fiddle, and banjo were placed between the brothers, and out of reach of each in the centre. The committee closed the two side-doors; and, as Mr. Olcott was closing the middle one, he was struck in the face by what appeared to be a man’s hand; and many of the audience saw the hand. How was that? The doors were opened, and there sat the two men quietly tied. They were examined, and were secure. Rev. Mr. Flanders then proceeded to shut the doors, and was quietly adjusting the bolt of the middle door, when he suddenly withdrew it, and turned about with a start.

“MR. FLANDERS. — ‘I will state to the audience, that, on reaching to adjust the bolt, my fingers were severely grasped.’

“Hardly were the words out of his mouth, when rap, thump, out of the opening came the heavy trumpet, right against and over Mr. Flanders’s head, on to the platform. [Little screams from the audience.] Their agent then opened the doors, and turned on the gas as quickly as possible; and the two men were sitting, each on his side, calm and fast.

“COL. OLCOTT. — ‘I will state that this trumpet was thrown out with such force that the mouth is bent.’

“REV. MR. FLANDERS (with his hand to his forehead). — ‘I’m afraid it was bent on my skull.’ [Laughter.]

“While the doors were being shut again, a hand passed quickly out twice before the middle door; and the audience saw it. Then a bell was thrown out of the opening, and, the doors being suddenly opened, the two men were sitting still and secure.

“WHISPERS. — ‘There’s no humbug about that.’ ‘Oh! oh! Did you see the hand?’

“Mr. Barnes, the well-known medium, sitting in the audience behind the reporter, assured a friend by his side, in a whisper, that there was no humbug about these young men. He travelled with them when they first appeared before the public. The spirits made them sleep together, and would take off their clothes, pull their hair, strike them, rap in all parts of the room, and so forth.

“The doors were shut, and a hand appeared, plain and palpable, shaking its fingers.

“The agent looked into the middle door, and a hand caught him by the beard. It had a man’s wristband and coat-sleeve.

“The doors were closed, and the committee took seats. Tremendous knocks were heard at the back, side, front, and top of the closet. Two hands, not ghostly and shadowy, but like those of flesh and blood, appeared out of the opening, and shook the fingers. The guitar and the violin were heard, as though being tuned. Mr. Flanders stood on one

side, and Mr. Olcott on the other, so that there was no part of the closet but that was visible as disconnected from the platform or column. Suddenly a band of musicians seemed to be playing inside the closet; there was the violin, the guitar, the banjo, and bell; a very quick jig was struck up, and continued a little time, and, while it was playing, a hand came at the opening. Finally, the spirits were disgusted with the music, and pitched the banjo violently out of the opening, so that it passed beyond the platform against a gentleman's head. The spirits were disorderly; they were mad; and there was no method in their madness. First they slammed the sides of the closet, as though they would knock it sky-high, so to speak; then they played spasmodically on the instruments; and, wildest of all, they must dash a banjo against a gentleman's head with a force greater than Dan. Bryant exerts in his most hilarious efforts. If the spirits could do that, and had no more respect for skull and brain, why might they not tumble the Institute of the far-famed Cooper down about our heads and ears? Why might not some of us, of a sudden, be snatched into the very clouds, and whirled on

‘Through the vast infinitude  
Of God's eternal interlude,  
On, on, forever’?

“‘No more of that, if you please!’ That is what some of the ladies thought. A gentleman suggested to the agent that mediumistic or metropolitan-police-clubistic influence must be exerted to prevent solid instruments or household furniture from being projected at the heads of the audience. The doors were opened quickly, and the young men were discovered, sitting apparently in meditative mood, tied fast. It was noticed, however, that they were in perspiration; but the closet was close.

“Mr. Flanders then sat in the closet, between the two

young men, one hand tied to each, so that any motion of body or limb would be felt by him.

“The doors were shut, and dead silence reigned. There was heard the sound of voices in the closet. Then came a great racket; it seemed to be a wreck of matter and a crash of worlds; the instruments were tuned.

“The doors being opened, there sat the young men and Mr. Flanders, smiling, with a banjo on his head. He was untied, and, coming out, took a bell out of his bosom.

“He said, while in the closet, what had occurred had been so incredible, that he was justified in a degree of hesitation in making the statement. He felt hands over his face, upon his breast, back, shoulders; his nose was held tightly, his ears pulled, he was struck with instruments; and all the while he had his hands on the young men’s legs, and his fingers stretched so as to touch their bodies: and they did not move. Of course, there was no deception here; and, as he did not like to be suspected of collusion, he should be glad if some other person would take the same place.

“A VOICE. — ‘Doctor, what was the talking about?’

“MR. FLANDERS. — ‘The young gentlemen were asking me if I felt the hands, and the instrument on my head.’

“When the doors were open again, the ropes were lying in a pile between the young men, and they walked out free. They were shut up again, and in four minutes the doors were opened, and they were securely tied, but not as they were at first: the ropes first used were recognized as the same now on the young men.

“Again the young men were shut up, and there was knocking and music, and appearances of hands and arms. Some affirmed that it was often the hand of a lady.

“A VOICE. — ‘Show us their faces.’

“THE AGENT. — ‘Faces not unfrequently appear.’

“VOICE. — ‘Let’s see one, then.’

“THE AGENT (philosophically). — ‘They are not mine to show.’

“VOICE. — ‘Can’t you catch that hand?’

“Acting on the suggestion, both of the committee grasped the hands as they appeared.

“VOICE. — ‘Were the hands cold?’

“MR. OLCOTT. — ‘No: they were warm and moist.’

“Mr. Flanders said he had tried to hold it; but, though his grip was very strong, he could not do it.

“Once, while the middle door was open, the trumpet, in full sight of the audience, shot into the air in the direction of Mr. Olcott’s head.”

The following is from “The St.-Louis Democrat” of Dec. 17, 1863:—

“Yesterday afternoon, the Davenport boys gave a *séance* at the ‘Hôtel de Paris,’ on Fifth and Walnut, at which the French consul, and some twenty-five other persons, of both sexes, were present. The great ‘medium critic’ was there, as well as the ‘Barnum’ (we forget his name) who superintends the worldly affairs of the brothers. At this *séance*, many wonderful things were performed; and the skeptic who could doubt, after beholding such wonderful manifestations, must have a head as hard as Tom Paine’s. The boys were not *lionized* this time, that is, were not put in a cage, but sat in plain view in the room. Their hands were tied fast; and the musical instruments played the old familiar tunes. The bell jingled, the hands flitted about as usual, passing over the faces of the auditors, and lingering, Onderdonk-like, on the cheeks and chins of the ladies. In addition to the other novelties, some loquacious spirit actually spoke. The spirit addressed himself to the French consul in these astounding words:—

“‘*Parlez vous Français, monsieur?*’

“‘*Certainement, monsieur,*’ replied the consul, who had acquired a smattering of French in his infancy; and he waited for the French spirit to proceed: but that shadowy being had got to the end of his rope, and was mum.



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“‘Be so good as to continue your communication in *le langue de France*,’ urged the consul.

“‘I don’t talk French,’ replied the spirit; and was then silent, fearing, no doubt, that, in the discussion with the French consul, he would ‘come out at the little end of the horn.’

“The medium’s coat having been taken off of him, he being tied to his chair, the manager explained the mystery by saying that the spirit possessed the power of taking the garment apart at the seams, and fastening the pieces together again in a twinkling, and all without the use of shears or sewing-machine. He furthermore explained the apparition of the hands. ‘These spirits,’ said he, ‘possess the power of uniting certain materials which they find in the air, and fashioning them into such shapes and forms as they choose, giving the color of natural objects, and endowing them with warmth, strength, flexibility,’” &c.

Says “The Washington Chronicle,” —

#### “THE DAVENPORT MANIFESTATIONS.

“Willard’s Hall, for the past week, has been nightly the scene of a series of the most wonderful performances ever witnessed in this or any other country. Two young men, called the Davenport brothers, aided, as they assert, by spirits, astonish the beholders by performing feats which have heretofore been classed among the impossibilities. Their hands and feet are tied; and they are put into a kind of wardrobe, when, presto! the door is hardly closed before a violin plays a tune, a bell is rung, a horn is sounded, and hands are visible at an aperture in the door of the wardrobe. While all this is going on, the door is opened suddenly; and the young men are discovered seated quietly, and tied firmly. The door is again closed, and when next it is opened, out walk the Messrs. Davenport, relieved of

their fetters by the hands of their invisible friends. Then they seat themselves once more; and, after a few more moments, they appear again, tied as they originally had been by the committee. But it is difficult to tell, or to expect people to believe, without seeing the wonderful feats performed through the young men; and, as they will remain another week, our readers who do not object to such exhibitions can have an opportunity to see and judge for themselves."

Says "The Schenectady Star," June, 1864, —

"It is very easy to say of the Davenports that they are humbugs. Perhaps they are; but that does not solve the mystery of their performances. It is quite true, that professional conjurers, by sleight of hand and machinery, have accomplished as much of the marvellous as have the Davenports; but they do not claim spiritual assistance, and therefore we pass them by with simply a 'wonder how they do it.'

"If we believe that the brothers slip their hands and feet from the ropes, and are able to replace them in a second, however carefully the ropes have been tied, then the secret of the whole performance is explained. But it does not seem possible. It seems incredible, that, under the careful watch of a committee anxious to detect, there should not be the slightest false movement, though almost every movement must be made with lightning-like rapidity if made at all.

"The usual number of hands were shown at the door of the closet last evening; the 'music,' as usual, was gone through with; the committee-man, as usual, occupied a seat between the performers, and felt hands on his face, in his hair, and on various parts of his body, and finally discovered a tambourine on his head; the horn, as usual, was dashed through the hole in the door, &c.

"As the performances are well worthy of investigation, we expect to see a large audience this evening."

Says the Galesburg, Ill., "Free Democrat," Aug. 27, 1863, —

"THE DAVENPORT BOYS.

"We attended the exhibition by these young men at Dunn's Hall last night. We have sometimes witnessed the performances of spiritualists before, but never saw any thing in them equal to the feats of jugglers, or entitling them to the credit of a first-class humbug. We went to the hall last night well fortified with incredulity, but confess that our defences failed us before the wonderful tests presented. We witnessed things not 'dreamed of' in any 'philosophy' of which we have knowledge; and to us they are unaccountable. We do not profess to understand them, or attempt to suggest any theory of explanation. Whether the work of spirits, of jugglery, or what not, these exhibitions are so strange, that they will attract throngs to witness them; and we would caution all persons against jumping at false conclusions, or being carried away into skeptical or superstitious notions. As the occupation and object of the spirits (if they be spirits, and we don't say they are not) seems to be to excite the wonder of the public, and enable the Davenport boys to make money, we would advise the public to receive the manifestations as they would any other entertainment wherein they get their money's worth, and let them pass without excitement, or puzzling their brains too much about the *rationale* of the phenomena.

"The following description from 'The Cincinnati Times' of May 22, 1863, applies so well to the performances in the hall last night, that we copy and adopt it: —

"The exhibition of the Davenport boys last evening was not very largely attended; but the audience was very select and intelligent, curious, of course, to investigate the mysterious manifestations which have occasioned so much astonishment everywhere. It is but just to state in the outset,

that all the persons connected with these exhibitions appear to be honest, well-meaning persons. They invite the most careful examination and scrutiny into all their movements; unlike jugglers, allowing the audience or committees to come upon the stage and examine for themselves, and also assist, so far as any assistance is necessary.

“They claim that their manifestations are made by virtue of spirit-power. A committee of two persons, known to the audience, was selected to assist upon the stage. The boys were tied in the cabinet made for that purpose, and similar in size and shape to a large wardrobe. The committee declared, that, by the most careful scrutiny, they could discover no machinery by which the boys could be enabled to do these things.

“The cabinet had three doors in front; and in the centre one there is a small aperture, to admit the air, probably. When the committee had tied the boys' hands and feet as fast as their ingenuity and strength would allow, the doors were closed, and immediately raps were made inside, and the ringing of bells, and music on the violin, accompanied by the guitar, tambourine, &c.; and, in the mean time, hands were thrust through the aperture in the door: and, in the midst of all these manifestations, the doors fly open, and exhibit the boys tied as fast as ever.

“The committee was shut up with the boys also, and declared that they could not perceive any movements on their part while these were going on. They also stated that their hands were grasped tightly by their arms, &c., &c. Any theory presented to explain these things requires a great deal of faith or credulity, whether the spiritual one of the boys themselves, or the psychological one of science. Each is hard to believe: let every person go and see, and decide for himself.”

Says a correspondent of one of the spiritual journals:—

## "THE DAVENPORT BROTHERS IN BALTIMORE.

"During the past three or four weeks, the Davenport brothers have been in Baltimore; and their *séances*, both public and private, have been attended by many hundreds of our citizens. Mere curiosity has given place to intelligent interest; and many who came to the hall to laugh at the tricks of jugglers have gone to their homes to reflect and ponder over the wonders they have witnessed.

"In order to give full force to what I am about to state in regard to these young men, and the manifestations of spirit-power presented through their mediumship, it will be proper for me to mention, that, previous to my personal investigation, I was skeptical in regard to the truth and honesty of the mediums, and had no faith in the genuineness of the manifestations. I was so much opposed to the exhibition of what I deemed a fraud in the guise of spiritualism, that I expressed to a friend of the Davenports my regret that they should think of coming to Baltimore.

"Being in New York when the first three or four exhibitions were given in our city, I was surprised and chagrined on my return to hear some of our most reliable and intelligent spiritualists express a conviction of the reality of the manifestations. I insisted that they had been duped, and regretted that they had countenanced an imposture by their presence.

"My opinion was based upon what I had read in the reports of the New-York Conference, some years ago; and I was strengthened and confirmed in this by the statements of a friend in Philadelphia, for whose integrity and intelligence I had the highest respect. I thought it impossible that there should be any mistake in the matter; and upon such testimony I not only pronounced the manifestations fraudulent, but refused even to witness them.

“But, Mr. Editor, I have a dear friend to whose voice I always listen with filial love and respect; one who has guided me through many pleasant paths, and whose counsels ever blend wisdom with affection. He, my dear spirit-father, said to me, —

“‘Washington, my child, we, your spirit-friends, desire that you should not denounce without full and fair investigation: attend these exhibitions, and scrutinize what may be presented. We are not in the direct sphere of these young men, therefore we cannot speak from our own knowledge of the character of the alleged manifestations; but while you are in contact with them we will be with you; while you examine with critical minuteness whatever may occur, we will quicken your vision; and, if fraud is attempted, will assist you to detect it.’

“With this counsel and promised aid, I went to the Davenport exhibition on the following Monday. During the ensuing three weeks, I attended fifteen public exhibitions, and sat with them in eight private circles. The result of this extended and careful investigation I desire now to present as concisely as possible to your readers.

“At my first visit, the mediums were securely tied, with hands behind them: the cords, passing through the seats of the cabinet in which they sat, were tightly wrapped, and tied around their ankles. While thus fastened, I saw a hand, not once or twice, but ten or more times, strike one of the committee who was standing near the door of the cabinet.

“In this case, the theory which some persons entertain in regard to this manifestation will not hold good: the rope was not *twisted* between the wrists, so as to resemble a knot, from which twist the hand could be drawn and dexterously thrust back again. The hand was larger than Mr. Davenport’s; and the door of the cabinet was not closed, but wide open, and light full upon it.

“When I entered the cabinet, I placed one hand upon each of the mediums. My cravat was taken off; my coat and vest unbuttoned; and the guitar, violin, and tambourine thrummed or beaten, and carried at the same time to any part of the cabinet which I directed. While this was being done, I felt hands touching my face: this, I assert, could not have been accomplished without my detecting some movement on the part of the Davenports.

“On one occasion, Mr. Berry, a rigger by profession, brought his own rope to the hall, having previously laid a wager that *he* could secure the mediums so that it would be impossible to loosen them. He went artistically to work, tying and splicing, and, when he had finished, so confident was he of success, that he promised the audience to believe in the spiritual theory if the medium was released. In much less time than Mr. Berry had used in tying him, Mr. Wm. Davenport was freed, and walked out upon the platform, to the astonishment of Mr. Berry, who, if a man of his word, must now be a good spiritualist.

“Upon another evening, Mr. R. D. Morrison, a lawyer and gentleman of good standing, who had previously attended a private circle, was selected as one of the committee. He also had imbibed the notion that the rope was not tied, but only *twisted* between the wrists. He therefore desired this opportunity to test the matter. After tying *three knots* between the wrists, and using a large quantity of rope to secure the body, legs, and feet of the medium, he declared himself satisfied; but a gentleman in the audience then proposed to him to tie the arms also. The suggestion was at once adopted; and with another piece of rope the arms were tied between the elbow and the shoulder. Whilst thus securely fastened, — feet, legs, and body, with three knots between the wrists, and ropes tied around his arms, — the coat of Ira Davenport was taken from his body, leaving the fastenings just as Mr. Morrison had placed them.

“On another occasion, at a public exhibition, I sat just eleven feet from the cabinet, and I saw a hand, to which no arm was attached, three times strike the committee-man: this occurred while a full light was thrown upon the cabinet. The same evening, I saw a hand at the opening in the top of one of the doors, after the doors of the cabinet were closed, which I *think* was smaller, and I also saw another hand that I *knew* was larger, than either of the Davenports’ hands. I also saw at that aperture a *female face*. The young men wear beards: that face was smooth and fair; and thrice I saw it.

“In a private circle, just at the moment when a light had been called for, I requested that the coat might be removed from the medium. The request was complied with; the light was struck; and at the same moment the coat flew, as it were, over the head of the medium, in view of the entire circle, while an immediate examination proved that he was still securely tied.

“In a room made perfectly dark, where no ray of light could penetrate, I had an apple brought to my lips with as much accuracy and delicacy of touch as I could have used in placing it there. It was held until I ate about half of it, when the remainder was taken across the room to my wife, and held to her lips while she consumed it. During the time the apple was with me, I used my feet to ascertain if any one stood near me, but could not touch any material thing.

“It would only weary your readers should I enumerate all the manifestations of spirit-power which were presented to me through the mediumship of these young men; therefore I will not extend the list, but will only add, that, during my extended investigation, I did not in a single instance detect any attempt at imposture, nor perceive the slightest tendency towards trickery.

“Though strongly prejudiced against the mediums per-



sonally, as well as against the character of their manifestations previous to meeting them, I now indorse, without hesitation, their mediumship; and deem it a pleasure, as well as an act of justice, thus publicly to express the respect and esteem which three weeks' close observation of their public and private life has caused me to feel for them. Instead of objecting to their presence in Baltimore, I shall welcome them hereafter with the affection of a brother, not forgetting to extend, also, a most kindly greeting to the invisible band who accompany and labor with them to extend to the masses a better knowledge of the life beyond the grave.

"The courteous demeanor of these gentlemen and their business-agent has won for them many friends.

"With sentiments of regard, I remain yours truly,

"WASH. A. DANSKIN."

"BALTIMORE, MD., April 8, 1864."

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## CHAPTER XX.

It could not be expected that pretensions like those of the brothers Davenport would go unchallenged long, especially when they themselves courted the severest scrutiny.

At one period of their career, they announced, that while the spirits were temporarily re-incarnated, they would eat food. In reference to this incident, and the test conditions under which it was actually done, Rand's pamphlet states as follows, the witnesses named being yet living (in 1869), so far as the writer hereof is aware:—

"Within the last few weeks, a new order of manifestations has been introduced: spirits have spoken with audible voices, in the light, without a trumpet, as we have rode or

walked by the way; and exhibited hands, placing them upon our persons, and handling us freely. Spirits have also eaten food in our presence, — cake, fish, boiled corn, pine-apple, and other fruits. We have usually placed the food upon the table, darkened the room, provided against any deception, then taken our seats around the table, near it or at a distance from it, as the case might be, when the spirits have freely eaten, and talked to us the while. Six or eight ears of corn have often been eaten in this way, at one time, and, in some instances, much more, together with other food. Of this we have had proof, as the spirits have often brought the corn to us, and requested us to partake with them.

“On one occasion, a party of gentlemen came to witness this, and brought thread to tie the mediums. They were first secured firmly by ropes, then the thread was added; after which the boys’ mouths were muzzled, and bandages were also put upon the mouths of all persons in the room. The pine-apple was then sliced and placed upon a stool, entirely removed from the mediums, when it was eaten by unseen visitors, who were heard at their merry repast; and the rinds of the apple were found put away at the close. There are a plenty of witnesses to these facts, whose names can be given to any who may apply to Rufus Briggs. For the satisfaction of those who may wish for evidence on this matter, we give the names of a number of persons present when the mediums were tied with ropes, and further secured with thread, and muzzled, and yet food was eaten by the spirits in their presence, — Philander Rathbun, John Knapp, Samuel Reynolds, David Fairchild, Rufus Briggs, persons resident in this city (Oswego, N.Y.), who came casually in, and when the spirits consented to give them a test, themselves procured their fruit and their thread. The fruit was placed entirely away from the mediums, upon a stool.”

Mr. Luke P. Rand, in an account of the manifestations,

says, "We had an exhibition of spirit-hands in the light, and also received communications written by spirit-hands in total darkness, — communications of great excellence in sentiment, and beauty of style. And the ruled lines of our marked and invariably identified paper were traced with the utmost accuracy in the dark; and the composition, taste, style, and punctuation, as well as the originality of idea, was entirely beyond the capacity of the boys, or any other person. These communications, thus received, were fraught with suggestions of momentous considerations, touching the improvement and elevation of our race."

The writer of this volume once served on a committee in Brooklyn, N.Y., and with his colleague spent thirty-seven minutes in tying the mediums; he fastening Ira with fifty-four hard knots, drawn with all his strength, which, for a short time, is greater than that of the majority of men. At all previous exhibitions, long arms — sometimes four or six at a time — were thrust through the aperture of the cabinet; and the other committee-man had come with means to detect fraud, if fraud was practised; for after furnishing Mr. Randolph, his co-committee man, with a sharp instrument wherewith to stab one or all of the aforesaid hands when they appeared at the orifice, he (the other man), under pretence of examining the knots (remember, the hands were tied *behind* the mediums), rubbed the hands of both William and Ira with a rag filled with lamp-black and oil, both fingers and wrists, palms and back; and neither of the media supposed that his fumbling meant any thing more than a further scrutiny of the knots.

This being done, Mr. Randolph put the knife in his pocket, *and kept it there*. The doors of the cabinet were closed; and instantly an arm and hand, long, beautiful, and pearly white, was thrust at least twenty inches through the hole in the door, and slowly turned round and round before

it faded away. The part of the hand or arm next to the box invariably disappears or fades away first; for an observer assured the writer that he had frequently seen the fingers long after the arm and palm had become invisible. And *there was not* a particle of black upon the hand.

Five minutes afterward, four hands came out. Still no black was upon them.

Later in the evening, Mr. Randolph demanded the flour-test. It was readily and cheerfully granted, and himself filled the four hands of the Davenports with flour; and, while he was in the very act of closing the cabinet doors, his head was grasped by a hand, the arm of which extended, naked, clear across the space of one of the doors, in full sight of an audience of over one thousand persons. The scene is well illustrated in the cut, pp. 301, 302. This occurrence was in the Brooklyn Athenæum, New York.

The writer does not merely believe that that was the hand of a human spirit, he KNOWS it; nor that the mediums did it: he will swear they could not possibly have extricated themselves in time, for he instantly threw open the other doors, and found both men tied firmly, as he had left them a few seconds previously.

Again he shut the two end doors, and bolted them: the middle door he pushed shut, when, as in all cases, it was instantaneously bolted on the inside, with a click perfectly audible to the entire audience; and this he regards as a feat second to none performed by the invisibles, it is done so very quickly. Having closed the doors, himself and colleague stepped back from the cabinet, and forthwith there appeared at the aperture a fair, large hand; but there was not a vestige of flour upon it. Four times did that hand appear. Then came the sound of ropes being untied: the doors were thrown open; the mediums, free from their fetters, stepped forth, opened their hands, still filled with flour, emptied it on the stage, and retired amid the thunderous

plaudits of one of the finest audiences ever collected beneath one roof, having triumphantly passed through an ordeal that will forever stamp them as honest men, gifted beyond comparison, and the first media of this or any other country.

That wonderful spirit-hand, — even now, its gentle pressure upon the writer's head is acknowledged by him to have been the thing, above all others, that gave him faith in the Davenports. The experience of Mr. Randolph is also that of poor Luke Rand, who says that "it was nothing else than the strong spirit-hand of Henry Morgan, who rules the band of spirits who give manifestations through the Davenport mediums.

"How many hundreds of persons have been permitted to feel the kindly clasp of that hand and other spirit-hands in the room or presence of the Davenport mediums! I have often felt the clasp of that hand, as it has come in contact with my material form, or taken hold of my hand with a firm grasp, handling me as if I were a child, holding the grasp long, until the indentations of the pressure were clearly seen by the audience, when my hand was released from the spirit-hand, in full view, in the bright light.

"Often, within three seconds from the time we have seen the mediums pinioned to their seats, beyond the possibility of release by themselves, has that spirit-hand, at a distance from the mediums beyond their possible reach, clasped my own with a firm grasp, and thus been thrust forth into the full gaze of the audience. And many scores of others, besides myself, have felt the same grasp, and had the same experience."

On the night of May 28, in Troy, N.Y., the Davenports, as usual, held a private *séance* after the public one, in which the same general order of manifestations occur, save that there is no cabinet used. Now, the Trojans are skeptical people, and some of them not over scrupulous or polite. Among them was a fellow who had followed prestidigitation,

or some other "ation," for a living. This person managed to foist himself on the committee on two successive nights. On both occasions, he tied the Davenports to his heart's content, using about two hundred feet of old, and as much new rope, and consuming fifty-one minutes in the process. When finished, he pronounced them "well" tied. The doors were closed, and the media stepped forth unbound in exactly eleven minutes.

He then boasted that he could do the same in fifteen seconds; whereupon a gentleman present offered to give the asylum one hundred dollars if he could do it in fifteen or fifty minutes; and the Davenports offered to tie him with four knots only, in the cabinet, and then place a thousand dollars on the floor thereof, which money he should have to his own use, provided he could get it, alone and unassisted, within six months. Mr. Conjuror left the stage.

The Davenports, as usual, then stepped into the box again, untied: the doors were closed, and in four minutes thrown open from the inside, and they were discovered to be bound tighter than before. Again the fellow boasted that he could do it in fifteen seconds; whereupon, Mr. P. B. Randolph took a hundred-dollar bank-note from his pocket, and publicly offered it to the legerdemain man, if he could untie either one of the mediums in fifteen minutes, alone, or with the help of his compeer by his side. To this he demurred, alleging that he required "six months' constant practice."

Not satisfied with his double defeat, and feeling not even a detected braggart's shame, the fellow blustered about the smallness of the proposed wager, as he chose to call these two offers of a free gift. "He would bet a thousand or two that he would!" Upon this, a friend of the Davenports said, "I am not a betting man; but the orphans need money, therefore I will plank down one thousand dollars to your five hundred, to as large a tune as you like. I'm not

particular whether I put down seven or seventy thousand (the winner to present his gains to the charity), that you cannot perform one of the things done here to-night in seven days, weeks, or months. I challenge you on the spot to be tied with four knots, and if you get loose in ten days, without knife or help, you win: if you do not, you lose. Or I will permit you to tie the Davenports with as much rope as you like, and if they do not come out untied, without help from knives, or embodied men or women or children, in less than one-fifth the time it takes you to tie them, you shall be considered the winner." Mr. Stupidity was blind as a bat.

Says the poet, —

"What can ennoble sots or slaves or cowards?  
Alas! not all the blood of all the Howards."

To which may fairly be appended these lines: —

"Of human insects small, amidst all truth's beraters,  
The smallest of them all are 'prestidigitators.'  
There's not a hole so small, but through it they will wheedle,  
And never touch sides at all, e'en though a tiny needle.  
Fourscore such souls would mount the upper air,  
And smuggle into heaven astride a single hair."

Says Prentice of "The Louisville Journal," —

"We have read of a great many wonderful feats performed by the Davenport boys, which seemed incredible; but we were fully convinced last night of their extraordinary achievements. We do not write this article as a puff for this troupe, but as an item of news for the curious. At the conclusion of the performance in the large hall, a private exhibition was given in one of the back rooms, to which about a hundred persons were admitted. The lights were extinguished, and two of the mediums tied fast by their wrists to the chairs upon which they were sitting.

The audience were then requested to join hands, and not let go, as such an act might be attended with serious results to the parties so offending the spirits. Several instruments which were placed upon the table — two guitars, a tambourine, trumpet, and dinner-bell — commenced sailing around the room, at the same time playing; and, like things of life, they would light in the laps and on the heads of the audience, and, after a few moments, resume their aerial flight. The tambourine frequently thumped the heads of different persons; while the dinner-bell kept flying to and fro with great velocity, striking the wall with force. The two mediums were tied and untied by this mysterious agency in less than a minute. One of the audience very inadvertently let go the hand of his neighbor; and a man sitting near him was struck on the forehead by one of the guitars, cutting him severely; and, when the light was struck, he was bleeding quite freely. It is unnecessary to state, that, after this admonition, there was no one who attempted the experiment again during the performance. But now comes the miraculous part of this truly wonderful exhibition. The spirits were requested to take off the coat of one of the mediums, whose hands, be it remembered, were tied fast by the wrists behind his back to the chair; and the feat was performed instantly. After this, one of the gentlemen in the audience took off his overcoat, and laid it upon the table; and the spirits were again invoked to put it on one of the fastened mediums. Incredible as it may appear, the light was no sooner extinguished than the coat was put on the medium, and his own thrown off, and this, too, in less time than it takes us to write it. Fully a hundred persons witnessed this extraordinary performance; and they left, like ourselves, wondering if the days of miracles had returned. They will only continue their performances during the present week; and those who would witness impossibilities to man should attend, and be convinced of our statements.”



From Troy they went to Albany, where the writer saw them for the last time.

It is entirely false reasoning to suppose that any human being can devote himself exclusively to labor of any description. It will not do. Rest will not give him adequate relief: he must be amused; he must enjoy himself; he must laugh, sing, dance, eat, drink, and be merry; he must chat with his friends, exercise his mind in excitingly gentle emotions, and his body in agreeable demonstrations of activity. The constitution of the human system demands this; it exacts variety of influences and motion; it will not remain in health if it cannot obtain that variety. Too much merriment affects it as injuriously as too much sadness; too much relaxation is as pernicious as none at all. But to the industrious toiler, the sunshine of the heart is just as indispensable as the material sunshine is to the flower: both pine away and die without it.

In other words, "All work, and no play, makes Jack a dull boy," and oftentimes a sick one, too, as proved the case with both the Davenports at this time; for William, in consequence of constant sitting, without due recreation and rest, was utterly prostrated with sickness at Albany: and Blanchard, their long-tried medical friend, had to be sent for from Chicago. He arrived in time to save William, but forbade him to exercise his vocation for a while; and he took him off to Chicago: and Ira was compelled to use the services of another medium in the cabinet along with himself. It had been arranged that William should leave on the morning after the opening night in Tweddle Hall, Albany; but he was not expected to officiate at the *séance*; yet, when the night came, by some strange impulse, he insisted upon taking his usual place in the cabinet, and did so; why, will shortly be seen.

While in Troy, some interested small-potato men had started the libel that the Davenports would not permit them-

selves to be tied with tarred rope, which coming to their knowledge, they instructed their lecturer, who stepped forward, and announced that his principals were ready to submit to any conceivable test, no matter what.

This was greeted with a salvo of cheers, and a committee selected, who proceeded first to tie them thoroughly with thin ropes, round which they wrapped, by aid of steel nippers, coils of thin copper wire, the ends of which they passed through and through the substance and lay of the rope, as tight as the work could possibly be done. The committee then placed a coin on each of their knees, shoulders, and backs of their hands, balancing them so nicely that the slightest movement of their bodies would cause them to roll off upon the floor. Then, pocketing the nippers, they were about to close the doors, when from the floor of the cabinet, right in a broad glare of gaslight, and in presence of the entire audience, the heavy brass trumpet shot full twenty feet into the air, over the heads of Ferguson and the committee: this created a joyful tumult. The horn was replaced, and again, in full view of all, it sailed away through the air as if shot out of a gun; but this time it was (as will be seen by reference to the engraving) accompanied by the tambourine, guitar, and bells. *The coins remained intact till the men were untied.* While their hands were bound, the most delicious music was played on eight instruments in the cabinet, hands were shown, and a variety of other manifestations given; in the midst of which Ira and William were both set free by the spirits. They were then tied by the invisibles, and other manifestations were going on, when Ira was suddenly taken ill, in the very midst of the performance, and had to be taken, prostrate, from the hall.

Now it was seen why William had been so strongly impelled to assist that night; for, had he left for the West, the *séance* would have broken down in the very middle of it: but, as it was, William remained in the box, and an *attaché*

of the troupe took Ira's place. The manifestations, though not so brilliant and startling as before, still went on quite satisfactorily, and the Davenports closed their mission to the Dutch burghers of Rensselaer in a blaze of triumphant glory. Among other singular attempts to fathom the mystery, one was so very cute and original as to deserve a passing notice here.

In the earlier days of their mediumship, the Davenports, as now, used to hold private circles in a dark room, *sans* cabinet, at the conclusion of their other circles; on which occasions their hands and bodies were firmly bound with strong cords to their chairs, the wrists being crossed. While thus tied, instruments were floated through the air, hands flew about, feeling of and patting the knees, faces, and heads of those present; after which, at the request of any person, one of them would be instantaneously stripped of his coat, and, on the light being struck, his hands were invariably found as securely bound and fastened as they were before this perfectly astounding feat.

The coat was not torn, cut, or ripped in the least. On the light being extinguished, the coat of any person in the room was put on him in the same mysterious manner; and as previously, so now, again, his hands and wrists were invariably found as they had been tied by the committee.

A hundred hypotheses have been started to account for this miracle. Some thought the seams of the coat were ripped out, and instantly sewed together again by the spirits; others maintained that the spirits cut the cloth by a sheet of lightning, and glued it together afterwards in the same manner; and many more notions, quite as absurd, were entertained. The writer can only say, that the thing is certainly done; but, when asked in what manner, he candidly confesses that he don't know.

The circles where this was performed were usually quite well attended, and not a few visitors imagined that the

mediums assisted each other in the coat-stripping business, and in the darkness handed the instruments, thrumming them the while, around the room; to detect which various cunning devices were resorted to.

On one occasion, a man slyly got up from his seat while the manifestations were going on, and, groping about in the dark, suddenly came in contact with, and desperately seized on, another person. Meanwhile, that other person seized on him; and both yelled out, "Strike a light! I've got him this time, sure." A light was struck, and, lo! a rogue had caught a rogue; for each had grasped a mutual friend, both on the *qui vive* for trickery, and both entire strangers to the Davenports, who were sitting quietly wired down to their chairs. What was particularly interesting and convincing was, that the instruments dropped in various parts of the room, over which they were floating when the light was struck. The rule in those circles was that people should join hands during the manifestations, and forbear to break the chain until the lights were struck. Accidents have occurred frequently in consequence of the non-observance of that rule. On one occasion, a gentleman named Gurney, in New York, was hit quite seriously in the head by a flying guitar, that suddenly dropped when some of the company let go hands, thus disturbing the required conditions.

In a private *séance* held in Utica, N.Y., the manifestations had been going on all the evening in the most satisfactory and astonishing manner, when, after a while, it became necessary to strike a light, and Mr. Davenport, sen., rose from his seat to do so. As he moved across the floor, streams of fire blazed up in dozens every step he took. It was unaccountable; but the lamp soon disclosed the fact that friction-matches strewed the floor, literally, in thousands. Here was a mystery.

An old gentleman, whose head was whitened with the

snows of more than eighty winters, here rose from his seat, and with great earnestness rebuked whoever had been guilty of thus profaning, as he felt it to be, the place where such manifestations of man's immortality were being produced. Such trifling offended him deeply. This brought out an explanation from a farmer present, who stated that he had come in from the country, on purpose to test for himself whether these wonders were produced by the boys through trickery, or whether there was really an agency outside of them. "And," said he, "I could think of no better way than the method I have used." Unknown to any living person, he had filled all of his pockets with the quickest friction-matches he could purchase. These he had strewn all over the floor, so thickly that no one could move his feet an inch without treading upon, and thereby igniting them. He had done this to ascertain whether the mediums carried the instruments about the room. If they had, the matches would have exposed them at once. All present were, of course, satisfied with the explanation, and the novel and ingenious manner of "trying the spirits."

A most striking instance of the manifestations being governed by independent intelligent agency occurred at Chicago, during a *séance* there, in April, 1861.

A voice speaking through the trumpet announced the beginning of the bombardment of Fort Sumter, nearly a thousand miles distant. An hour or so later, the same news came in due course by telegraph. Had the manifestation ended here, it might be considered a lucky guess, or a remarkable coincidence; but the news of the events of this famous siege came hour by hour, and day by day, and always in advance of the telegraph, owing to the time taken by the latter in repeating messages. There were two excited crowds in Chicago filling the streets, greedy for news, — one at the telegraph-station, another at the rooms of the brothers Davenport; and the news by the Davenport

telegraph not only came sooner, but was more accurate. This was notably shown when the electric telegraph announced that the Confederate floating battery had been knocked in pieces by the guns of Fort Sumter. The trumpet voice denied that any such thing had happened. Bets were made on the result; and, when later news came, the Davenports were found right, as usual.

At Painesville, Ohio, a beautiful city on Lake Erie, the manifestations were subjected to a series of tests, by Judge Paine (after whom the city was named), and a merchant named Abbott, which showed no little ingenuity, and were arranged with the positive expectation of detecting the brothers in fraud. These were men of the class who may be called invincibly incredulous. Neither seeing, hearing, nor feeling, with them, was believing. During the six days, of two *séances* each, these gentlemen were generally present, instituting new tests at each visit, which being triumphantly overcome by the spirits, only stimulated their ingenuity to devise more certain methods of detection. After the brothers had been bound as securely as the Lake Erie sailors and riggers could tie them, and the manifestations had been made while they were thus bound, spectral hands shown, instruments played upon and thrown about, and they unbound by what appeared invisible agency, the judge proposed a test, which, he said, would satisfy him and everybody. Of course nothing is more common than for a man to imagine that what satisfies him of the truth of something hard to believe must satisfy everybody else. But the result is, that, when thus satisfied, he is instantly denounced as a fool or a knave by all the remaining unbelievers.

The learned judge said, if the boys were bound, not with rope, but with linen thread, and this sealed with sealing-wax, and then the trumpet blacked with printer's ink, so as to blacken any hand that touched it, he would be satisfied,

and everybody else, of course. The test was accepted: the manifestations occurred as usual, the seals were unbroken. Was Judge Paine satisfied? Not in the least. The next day, he was ready with a new test. This time, the boys were first tied with cords, then enclosed in sacks, and the sacks tacked to the floor. All the instruments were blacked, and every possible precaution taken. The hall and the streets were crowded with people. The hands were formed, the instruments whirled about in the air, and beaten; the guitar coming twenty feet from the boys, by actual measurement, striking the judge on each side of his head, and then left in his lap, abundant evidence being given that somebody or something was wide awake and active: but, when lights were brought, the brothers were very safe in their sacks. When the judge saw them secure, he said to his friends, "We've got to give in on this!" But next day he had a new theory,—the boys had untied themselves, ripped open the bags, made the manifestations, and then got back again all safely sewed up and tied. Truly, there is no credulity like incredulity.

While at this place, the brothers were entertained by private families; Mr. Davenport and Dr. Blanchard, their agent, boarding at the hotel. The contemptuous feeling of two gentlemen, who, with their wives, occupied places at the table in the immediate vicinity of Mr. Davenport and the doctor, could not be satisfied without frequent low and insulting remarks concerning "the spirits at Marshall Hall," with mocking laughs and jeers, evidently intended to provoke a retort. This occurred for several days; but no notice was taken of it by the gentlemen who were the objects of this grossly insulting conduct, they deeming it entirely beneath their dignity as earnest, sincere men, to respond to these flings of conceited ignorance. On the last evening of their stay, the curiosity of these parties drew them to the hall. Mr. Davenport, with his usual courtesy,

politely gave them seats in as convenient a place as possible, among the hundred people who had come to witness the last *séance*. Instantly, upon the light being extinguished, "King's" voice was heard saluting with "good-evening," various friends by name, and then bringing the trumpet down upon the table with a resounding *thwack*.

"Mr. Davenport," called out one of the above-mentioned sneering gentlemen from the hotel, "can I have the privilege of going to the table in the dark, and placing those horns under the table, or where I please?"

"Certainly, sir," was the reply.

With that, he left his seat, and was soon heard leisurely moving the trumpets about. Declaring himself satisfied with their position, he, by the aid of his wife's voice, indicating her position, made his way to his seat by her side and that of his friends.

"Well," said the voice of "King," just as he reached his chair, and close to the party, "I suppose you think you have done it now. Do you suppose I want to black my angelic fingers with the stuff you have daubed on the trumpets?"

While this voice was speaking, both the women exclaimed that some one had hold of their dresses; and the men said that fingers were touching their faces, and handling their persons. "Strike a light," said "King;" and the trumpet fell upon the table. As the light flashed over the room, both the sneering gentlemen rushed up to the table, carefully examining the horn, and also the mouths of the boys; but the printer's ink (which in the darkness one of them had placed upon both trumpets) was not to be seen *where they expected to find it, but streaking their own faces, upon their white vests and pants, and all over the dresses of their wives*, whence it had been transferred from the trumpets; but not by the mediums' hands,



which bore not a stain. A roar of laughter from the entire audience greeted the discomfited party, who did the best thing possible under the circumstances, by joining in the merriment.

The conditions were unusually favorable upon this occasion; and the spirits improved them. A young man had appeared at the door, having stopped on his way home, undecided whether to attend the *séance*, bringing a new tambourine, which he had just purchased. Mr. Davenport invited him to come in, and suggested that perhaps "King" would play on the instrument for him; at the same time guaranteeing its safety. The hall was about forty-five feet long by twenty-five wide, and the audience were seated on all sides of it against the wall; the mediums being tied to their chairs in the centre of the room. After the *ink-ling* of what "King" could do had somewhat prepared the audience for wonderful displays of power, and broken down, by the mirthfulness excited, that barrier of constraint which a company of people generally feel when first brought together, the tambourine was taken up, and with incredible swiftness borne the whole length of the hall and over the heads of the audience; being played on with a power which not only threatened, but did actually destroy it. The woodwork cracked, snapped about in fragments, which fell in all parts of the hall; and, when the light was lit, nothing remained but the head, the instrument being thoroughly used up.

Davenport naturally felt considerably excited after guaranteeing the safety of the instrument, and allowed himself to scold "King" in a very decided manner for destroying the young man's property. "That's nothing," said "King:" "I'll take up a collection to buy him another."

"Will you?" said a gentleman present; "then you may use my hat for a contribution-box, and I'll start the contribution."

With that he rose quietly, unknown to the company, and standing up in his chair, at full height, lifted his hat as high as he could reach, holding in his hand also a small piece of money. Almost instantly, that piece of money was taken from his hand, was heard to drop into the hat, as it also was taken from him, and went sailing about the room upon its mission. Pausing before each person, the voice recognized the amount deposited, in several instances changing quarter and half dollar pieces, taking out the amount specified, and placing the change, in every instance, accurately in the hands of the contributor.

After thus passing once entirely around the hall, the hat was carried to the table, and the jingle of its contents heard as it was poured out. Some one asked "King" to count it, and find out how much he had got. Complying with this request, the voice says, "There's ten cents, there's a quarter, there's five cents, which makes forty;" and so on, until he announced that there was one dollar and fifteen cents in silver, and *one counterfeit one-dollar bill*.

"I guess not," said the voice of a visitor.

"I tell you, there is," said "King," "and I shouldn't think you would pass a counterfeit bill on a spirit. Strike a light, and you will find the money all on the table. But don't you steal it!—a man that will pass counterfeit money will steal."

The lamp was lighted, the money counted, and the amount found exactly as stated, and the bill, after thorough scrutiny, admitted to be counterfeit.

It was not, however, until darkness was again restored, that a visitor present acknowledged that he had put that counterfeit bill into the hat as a test of the discriminating power of the operating intelligence. "I know," said he, "that no person but myself knew what I had done; and to me it is proof positive that spirits are here besides those in the body."

“King” declared that there wasn’t money enough to buy a tambourine, as he had but a dollar and fifteen cents; whereas he wanted fourteen shillings. Several in the company asked him to come around again, and they would give more. Accordingly, he consented, and had passed about half-way along one side, and to the end of the hall, and was making change for a gentleman who sat next to Mr. Davenport, when Mr. Marshall, the owner of the building, who was seated twenty feet from Davenport, on the opposite side, suddenly exclaimed that Ira had settled down from overhead into his lap. Instantly “King” went back to the table, and, taking up the horn, ordered Davenport to strike a light. This done, Ira was found in Marshall’s arms, and the hat set down at Davenport’s feet.

In explanation of this occurrence, “King” said his draught upon the *vital force* of the medium Ira, in order to enable him to pass around the first time, had been very great, and that, in attempting to accomplish it the second time, Ira had to be actually drawn above the magnetic sphere of the persons present, toward the ceiling, from whence he had sunk down into Marshall’s arms, through the exhaustion of the element.

Perhaps the most thorough investigation to which the brothers were subjected was the one undertaken by the Harvard professors, in 1857. Harvard is the Oxford of the New World, the oldest university, and one which holds the highest rank. Among those who undertook to investigate the phenomena of spiritualism, with a view to exposing it as a delusion, were Profs. Agassiz, Felton, and Pierce. Among the mediums who attended their summons were the Misses Fox and the brothers Davenport. Concerning the former, after the most careful examination, the professors made no other discovery than that there were “unaccountable noises,” — a discovery which any country bumpkin was equally competent to make. As to the brothers Davenport, this, according to Dr. Nichols, is what occurred: —

“The brothers Davenport were reserved till the last. At the beginning, they were submitted to a cross-examination. The professors exercised their ingenuity in proposing tests. ‘Would they submit to be handcuffed?’ — ‘Yes.’ ‘Would they allow men to hold them?’ — ‘Yes.’ A dozen propositions were made, accepted, and then rejected by those who made them. If any test was accepted by the brothers, that was reason enough for not trying it; they were supposed to be prepared for that: so some other must be found. It was of no use to put them to any test to which they were ready and apparently eager to submit. At last, the ingenious professors fell back upon rope. They bored the cabinet, set up in one of their own rooms, and to which they had free access, full of holes. They tied the two boys in the most thorough and the most brutal manner. They have, as any one may see or feel, small wrists, and hands large in proportion; good, solid hands, which cannot be slipped through a ligature which fits even loosely on the wrists. When they were tied hand and foot, arms, legs, and in every way, and with every kind of complicated knotting, the ropes were drawn through the holes bored in the cabinet, and firmly knotted outside, so as to make a network over the boys. After all, the knots were tied with linen thread. Prof. Pierce then took his place in the cabinet between the two brothers, who could scarcely breathe, so tightly were they secured. As he entered, Prof. Agassiz was seen to put something in his hand. The side doors were closed and fastened. The centre door was no sooner shut than the bolt was shot on them inside, and Prof. Pierce stretched out both hands to see which of the two firmly-bound boys had done it. The phantom-hand was shown, the instruments were rattled; the professor felt them about his head and face, and at every movement kept pawing on each side with his hands, to find the boys both bound as firm as ever. Then the mysterious present of Prof. Agassiz became ap-

parent. The professor ignited some phosphorus by rubbing it between his hands, and half suffocated himself and the boys with its fumes in trying to see the trick or the confederate. At last, both boys were untied from all the complicated fastenings without and within the cabinet, and the ropes were found twisted around the neck of the watchful Prof. Pierce."

Well, and what came of it all? Did the professors of Harvard tell what they had seen? Not in the least. To this day, they have made no report whatever of the result of their investigation, and are probably, to this day, denouncing it all as humbug, imposture, delusion, &c. What can a man of science do with a fact he cannot account for, except deny it? It is the simplest way of overcoming a difficulty, and avoiding the confession that there is something in the world which he does not understand. Of all men in the world, men of science, and especially scientific professors, are the last to acknowledge that "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in their philosophy."

In February, 1864, the brothers visited Philadelphia for the first time, giving several public exhibitions to the general satisfaction and astonishment of their visitors. It was here that some influential spiritualists, for reasons best known to themselves, attempted to turn the ignorance and prejudices of the community against the brothers. An article appeared in one of the daily papers, written by a leading spiritualist, of rather a denunciatory character, which successfully stirred up many "rude fellows of the baser sort," known as "plug-uglies," to threaten the Davenport's with tar and feathers, and a rail-ride over a rough road out of the city, if they dared to give any more exhibitions in the "city of brotherly love." These threats being personally made to Mr. Lacy, their agent, by a deputation of determined roughs, that gentleman, with the full con-

currence of the brothers, decided to remain "positively one night more," and test the question. Accordingly, another large hall was obtained for Saturday evening, and the city thoroughly placarded with their announcements. The excitement increased; and a rough crowd were in waiting to press to the front as soon as the doors were opened. The gang of two hundred valiant ruffians were bound to execute their threats; and only waited for the farce of a committee of their own number to be appointed, who should "fix" the brothers in such a way as to prevent their playing their tricks, before taking them in hand, and serving them out a specimen of plug-ugly hospitality. The two members of the committee did their work very thoroughly, and so much to their own satisfaction, that, on finishing, they triumphantly called out to the audience, "When those brothers come out of that cabinet, we shall have to untie them, and take them out!" In addition to an unusually complicated fastening with the ropes, they had brought in copper wire so large as to be unmanageable with fingers; and blacksmith's pincers were used to twist it over the ropes and knots. Thus secured, and while the clapping of the crowd applauded the boast of their committee, as the cabinet door was shut, out came the horn through the aperture of the door, hands flashed before the startled audience, and the committee sprang to the doors to catch the boys. There they sat, placid and immovable, ropes, wires, knots, just as they were left a moment before. The committee stared at the boys, they stared at each other, they stared at their cronies; and then, with native honesty (just as truly at the bottom of a plug-ugly's heart as that of a priest), they came forward, and declared to the audience that the hands which had appeared, and which had handled that horn, were not the hands of the Davenport brothers; for their hands *could not be got out of the fastenings*. The suddenness of the manifestations, the positive proof before their

own eyes, the "caving-in" of the committee, now turned the tide of feeling with a rush in favor of the brothers. If those "who came to mock" did not "remain to pray," they did remain to witness the perfect success of the manifestations throughout the entire evening; and at its close, when the brothers came forth unbound by the spirits in two and a half minutes' time, the cheers from the entire audience were deafening. A general rush was made for the platform to take the brothers by the hand; and that rough crowd, who came with "tar and feathers" in their purpose, now offered to pay the expenses of the hall for a week, and give them the entire receipts, if they would but continue their exhibitions: but advertised engagements in Baltimore and Washington prevented; and, leaving a few disappointed grumblers and conceited critics, who had done their best to injure them, still to misrepresent and asperse their life-long labor, they carried with them the proud consciousness, that, to the poor in spiritual knowledge, the gospel of immortality had been demonstrated.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

TEN years of strange and wonderful experiences in America were completed in this year (1864) by a tour through the British-American provinces, and a series of remarkably successful *séances* at that famous summer resort and Mecca of fashion, Saratoga Springs, in the State of New York.

At Montreal and Quebec, the superstition and intense conservatism of the people were arrayed in bitter opposition to the pretensions of the Davenports. At Toronto, London,

St. Catherine's, and some of the smaller towns, they met with more favorable reception, and the manifestations were more candidly investigated.

While at Saratoga, their preparations and business arrangements were completed, to obey the directions which they had received from their spirit-guides to cross the Atlantic to their ancient fatherland, the birthplace of their mother, and in which the dust of their ancestry reposes, there to continue, in Britain and in Europe, a mission in whose beneficent purposes they have undoubting faith.

The business and pecuniary portion of this new undertaking — involving, as it did, that most delicate and important problem, how to bring these strangers in a strange land, accompanied by marvels stranger than either, to the notice of a public ready to be amused, but terribly sensitive to the suspicion of being duped or outwitted — was confided to Mr. H. D. Palmer, widely known as an *impresario*, or business manager, in the operatic and dramatic world. His experience as an agent, and acquaintance in literary and dramatic circles, eminently fitted him for introducing his *protégés* to that class of intelligent and educated men whose professional habits of thought render them cosmopolitan and universal. It may be safely affirmed, that authors and artists are, as a class, far more liberal and comprehensive in spirit than the plodding students of material science, who seem to distrust all phenomena for which they cannot immediately account on known principles and by the action of recognized forces.

England is probably one of the most incredulous, materialistic, practical, and impracticable countries in the world. Hard, scientific, unimpressible, and unimaginative, devoted to precedent, and respecting authority, the English people, as a rule, have long since adopted and are now firmly settled in the belief that there is and can be nothing beyond the range of ordinary experience. If the brothers



Davenport had really any mission in England, it was to meet on its own low ground, and conquer by appropriate means, the hard materialism and skepticism of England. The first step to knowledge is to be convinced of ignorance: small things often lead to great results.

If the manifestations given by the aid of the brothers Davenport can prove to the intellectual and scientific classes that there are forces — and intelligent forces, or powerful intelligences — beyond the range of their philosophies, and that what they consider physical impossibilities are readily accomplished by invisible, and, to them, unknown intelligences, a new universe will be open to human thought and investigation.

Fortunately, or perhaps we should say providentially, attracted to the exhibitions of the Davenports a few weeks before, and immediately brought into intimate personal acquaintance with them, was the Rev. J. B. Ferguson, a gentleman of education and position, formerly a clergyman of Nashville, Tenn., where he was highly respected and esteemed. Forty-seven years of age, a man of integrity and honor, of high religious principle, purity of character, deep thought, and eloquent expression, he was eminently adapted to the sphere of usefulness to which he was now called; viz., that of accompanying the brothers to Europe as an interpreter to the public of the objects and nature of the manifestations made in their presence.

From Mr. Ferguson's statement of his connection with the brothers, we make the following extract:—

“On the night of the 26th April, 1864, in company with a friend, I attended the exhibition of the brothers Davenport at the Cooper Institute, N.Y. On the night succeeding, in company with five of my friends from the Southern States, I attended another exhibition at the same place. I had been for years familiar with phenomena and experiences of a similar character to those represented as attending the

brothers; and, from the knowledge of this fact, my Southern friends were anxious that I should accompany them.

“Of the Davenports themselves personally, or as representatives of the ‘wonders’ associated with their names, I knew nothing. Of course, I had often seen their names in public prints; but my attention to what was said, either in their favor or to their disparagement, had never been sufficiently attracted to secure any conviction respecting them. Accordingly, on my way to their proposed entertainment, in reply to a question of my friends, I remember to have stated, that if the Davenports were not jugglers or deceivers, and were really instruments through which man’s allied nature to the invisible or spiritual world was reflected, we should receive evidence such as no candid man could refuse to accept. I also expressed a hope that one of my friends, who was a skeptic in the saddest sense, would receive the tangible proof of what he had heard me assert and defend for fifteen years.

“When we came to the place of meeting (the large lecture-room of the Cooper Institute, the largest in New-York City), we found some thousands assembled. The entertainment (for such it may properly be called) opened; and a committee was chosen to secure the young men in the cabinet, and report to the audience what occurred. I need not describe the manifestations, or their effect on the audience, as the New-York papers gave graphic reports at the time, and have indulged in tiresome repetitions since. It is enough to say that I was convinced that the Davenports were no jugglers, and that the displays of power through them admitted of no explanation according to any known estimate of natural laws. I called upon the Davenports in private, and attended their public entertainments for eleven days and nights. My skeptical friend, after the closest scrutiny, admitted that there was no clandestine mechanism or arrangement of machinery, and no sleight of

hand, in what he had so doubtingly and thoroughly examined. He is a man of the first eminence, at home and abroad, in discovery, and in the application of discovery in the most intricate and difficult mechanics, and in mechanical skill has few equals.

“When the Davenports appeared at Brooklyn, near New York, it happened that their representative before the public was absent; and they, through their friends, invited me to introduce them to the public of the city of Brooklyn. In that city, at the time, I was solicited to meet the representatives of a highly respectable religious society, with a view to becoming their pastor. I, however, consented to introduce the Davenports in ‘the city of churches.’ I did this in a spirit of candid inquiry and experiment respecting a subject which I hoped might prove of interest. I did so, knowing that, however desirable it might be that I should become the pastor of the church above mentioned, my action in this matter would put an end to all hope of such pastoral charge being intrusted to me. I did so because I was fully convinced that the phenomena which occurred in the presence of the brothers was a part of the supramundane evidence given to this age, — evidence not to be measured by the conventional restrictions of time and men, however respectable the time, or however religious the men.

“When I saw and knew for myself, and not by another, that the evidences given through the Davenports were true, I accepted a proposition to accompany them to England and Europe, if, after three or four months’ experience with them before the public, I should find the work such as I could perform without detriment to them or to myself. Accordingly, I spent three months in the interior towns and cities of New-York State and New England, and a month in the chief cities of Canada. During this time, they were brought before every class of the communities they visited: every conceivable form of fastening, and other

methods of 'test' and trial, were submitted to, such as being held by the hands and feet while the manifestations of force were witnessed, the use of sealing-wax, and many other devices, and always with complete and undeniable success. Indeed, it were impossible for me, by any use of language, too strongly to state this fact.

"During this time, I resided with them at the same hotels, and we often occupied the same suite of apartments. I travelled with them, in the unavoidable intimacy of travelling companionship, over thousands of miles of the widespread territory referred to; and, consequently, must have had every opportunity of detecting fraud, if fraud there were to be detected. But it becomes me to say, that I never detected any, nor the appearance of any. When they were, to all appearance, sound asleep, some of the most marked of the manifestations have occurred. In travelling by rail, when entering a dark tunnel, I have, to a mental wish, received them in tangible and unmistakable forms. . . . As we entered another tunnel, I changed my position in the railroad carriage, so that no one of my party could touch me without my knowledge. In response to a mental wish, I was touched, my face manipulated, and my person distinctly handled, when I knew positively that no one visible was near me. Of the satisfaction given by such an evidence, I need not speak: no words can do it justice. I state the fact, and leave it to the appreciation of all who have the desire for similar evidences. I could give many other instances of force, guided by invisible intelligence. On extinguishing the light in my room, I have had my chair instantly lifted, and placed upon my head, with the legs upward, and the cushion resting on the top of my head. A voice (not mine, nor that of any one present) has directed me to feel the position of those present. I did so, while the chair held itself, or was held, firmly where it was placed. In distinct vocal tones, I was invited to be seated; the chair

being at the same time taken from my head and placed properly, that I might comply with the invitation.

“I might record a volume of such and similar manifestations. But with respect to all these evidences, expressions, or demonstrations from the invisible world, I have one remark to make: I wish it to sink deep into the minds of my readers. These are not given in response to mere curiosity, idle wish, or selfish desire. They have come when and where they were needed, and where there was a degree of good faith in the individual to use the evidence for universal good. The rule with me is, that, whenever and wherever the mind is ready for an ascent in actual progress, evidences are given that transcend all our existing standards of truth and good.

“For months I have travelled with the Davenports; and in various conditions, advantageous and disadvantageous, I have witnessed the evidences of the power that attends them. I have seen them subjected to every form of scrutiny that skepticism could devise. I have seen their professed friends, with anxiety caused by a bigoted and sensuous denial, return to the Davenports with fresh doubts, to be met and re-assured by evidences that admitted of no denial. I can truthfully say, that no time, place, or condition, of the most diverse and promiscuous audiences, or the most select companies, has ever prevented the manifestations, though they have been rendered less satisfactory in various ways. The anxiety caused the brothers by aimless discussion, captious criticism, and obstinate denial, is a very unfavorable condition. I have seen them associated with persons who only wished to make gain of their gifts, and whose methods of presenting them to the public were calculated only to produce distrust, and to place the evidences of the power attending them on a level with ordinary jugglery. I have seen these persons confounded, most unexpectedly to themselves, by the evidences of truth, wisdom, and power

attending the manifestations. Through the most pains-taking ordeals, the severest scrutiny, the most searching analysis, these evidences have passed. They have ever come forth more clear, more satisfactory and convincing to all honest inquiry. Many of my own friends, utterly unconvinced, and looking upon me with profound astonishment that I should be so duped as to become insensible to the charms of respectability, and, I may add, to the attraction and use of the 'almighty dollar,' have witnessed these evidences, and have either become silent, or have acknowledged that no duty could be more sacred than the one I have assumed. In the presence of doubt, distrust, and odium, my own arm has at times become weak, and my heart faint.

"This state in me has been met by proofs of a superior recognition and protection beyond the power of mortals to order or deny. Hence, I can say, in presence of men, and of the great unseen though not unknown Power who governs all human action, that these evidences are all that is claimed for them (and even much more) by those through whose agency they are brought before the mind. These evidences are entirely above and beyond the capacity of those through whom or by whom they are given, physically, intellectually, and morally. True, the mental capacity of the Messrs. Davenport is fully equal to, if not above, the average of their countrymen, or men of their age and opportunities. Physically, they are sound, healthy, active men. Morally, I know them to be honest, candid men, with manly moral courage, decision of character, perseverance, and self-reliance under difficulties and dangers that would have appalled many who have presumed to disparage them without knowledge of their character, or from inability to account for these wondrous manifestations. I feel it a duty I owe to truth to say that I know these men as well as men usually know each other. I know also that

it is thought that persons who are made the instruments of such or kindred manifestations are liable more than others to disease of both body and mind, and it is often more than hinted that their morality is far beneath the common standard. This is not true of the Davenports. And when it is considered that for three years they gave free exhibitions, and for over seven years they have made these exhibitions the business of their lives, and are to-day men of clear heads, and sound, healthy bodies, we are forced to the conclusion, that the manifestations through them are perfectly consistent with the laws or conditions of mind, physical organization, or true moral responsibility. Indeed, in a somewhat varied field of observation upon men and manners, I know of no men of like age and opportunities who are their equals, certainly none their superiors, in all that tends to sound judgment, perseverance in the path of duty, or capacity to meet the diverse fortune or serious responsibilities of life."

The brothers Davenport embarked from the city of New York on the 27th of August, 1864, arriving safely at Glasgow Sept. 9, and on the 11th reached the great metropolis. As reported by Dr. T. L. Nichols, —

"Their first private *séance* was given at the residence of Mr. Dion Boucicault, the well-known dramatic author and actor, author of 'London Assurance,' 'The Young Actress,' 'Colleen Bawn,' 'Streets of London,' and a score of entertaining and delightful comedies and dramas, in which it is hard to say whether his merits as dramatist or actor are more conspicuous. I speak in this special manner of Mr. Boucicault as a matter of justice, because he has shown a moral courage equal to his ability, and because I shall be indebted to his hand for one of the clearest descriptive statements of the nature of these manifestations that has ever been written.

"This first and very important *séance*, given Sept. 28, 1864, was attended by several gentlemen connected with

the leading daily newspapers of London, and other distinguished men of science and letters. It would have been difficult to select a company better able to examine the phenomena presented, or better qualified to make a proper report to the public. In the case of the production of a new farce, the opening of a donkey-show, or a prize-fight for the belt of the champion of England, the reports of these gentlemen, who stand upon the staffs of their respective journals, would have been published in the usual form; but in this case, where occult powers and hidden forces of the universe were in question, every daily paper, excepting 'The Morning Post,' published the accounts which were given as anonymous communications. This is not at all to be wondered at. Considering the obstinate incredulity of the public mind, it is wonderful that the editors of these leading organs of public opinion published them at all. It may be supposed that they thought the facts reported to them too marvellous to be vouched for, but also too striking to be passed over in silence.

"I propose to copy from these reports so much as may be pertinent to the case and interesting to the reader, taking the liberty to condense, by omitting superfluous portions and unnecessary repetitions; and first the article from 'The Morning Post,' which appears to have been written by one of its staff editorial.

[From the London "Morning Post," September 29, 1864.]

#### EXTRAORDINARY MANIFESTATIONS.

Yesterday evening, in the front drawing-room of a house in the immediate neighborhood of Portland Place, a select number of persons were invited to witness some strange manifestations which took place in the presence, if not by the agency, of three gentlemen lately arrived from America.

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It should be stated at the outset, that the trio who appear to be gifted in so extraordinary a manner do not lay claim to any



particular physical, psychological, or moral power. All they assert is, that in their presence certain physical manifestations take place. The spectator is, of course, at liberty to draw any inference he pleases. They invite the most critical examination (compatible with certain conditions to be observed); and those who witness the manifestations are at liberty to take all needful precautions against fraud or deception.

The party invited to witness the manifestations last night consisted of some twelve or fourteen individuals, all of whom are admitted to be of considerable distinction in the various professions with which they are connected. The majority had never previously witnessed any thing of the kind. All, however, were determined to detect, and if possible expose, any attempt at deception. The brothers Davenport are slightly-built, gentleman-like in appearance, and about the last persons in the world from whom any great muscular performances might be expected.

The writer proceeds to describe the cabinet, and says the bolt of "the middle door was shut by some invisible agency from the inside." The brothers are securely tied. "Instantly, on the centre door being closed, the bolt was secured inside, and hands were clearly observed through the opening. A gentleman present was invited to pass his hand through the opening, and it was touched several times." Music was heard; the doors flew open; the brothers are seen to be firmly secured; the doors are "closed by persons, who, when doing so, were touched by invisible hands, and the noise of undoing the cords was distinctly heard." "After an interval of two minutes, the brothers were found securely bound with the same cords, the ends of the rope being *some distance from their hands.*" A gentleman sits in the cabinet, with his hands tied to the knees of the two Davenports, whose hands were bound behind their backs and to the bench, and their feet securely fastened. The gentleman stated, that, "the instant the door was closed, hands were passed over his face and head, his hair was gently pulled, and the whole of the musical instruments played upon, the bells violently rung close to his face, and the tambourine beat time on his head. Eventually the instruments were thrown behind him, and rested between his shoulders and the back of the cabinet." A gas-burner and two candles were burning.

Here are the facts, — two Davenports and a witness in a box scarcely larger than needed to contain them, and all securely bound; yet observe what happened. —

A dark circle was then formed, the brothers bound to chairs, and the whole company, including Mr. Ferguson and one of the mediums, taking hold of hands. "*The instant* the lights were extinguished, the musical instruments appeared to be carried all about the room. The currents of air which they occasioned in their rapid transit were felt upon the faces of all present. The bells were loudly rung, the trumpet made knocks on the floor,

and the tambourine seemed to be running round the room, jingling with all its might. At the same time, tiny sparks were observed as if passing from south to west." Several persons were lightly, and one (the representative of "The Times") severely struck with the passing instruments. Lights were struck from time to time, and the brothers always found securely bound.

The medium was now bound to one of the chairs, with his hands firmly tied behind him. As soon as the light was extinguished, a whizzing noise was heard. "It's off," said he, meaning his coat; and, on striking a light, his coat was no longer on, but lying on the floor, and his hands were still tied together behind him! "Astonishing though this appeared to be, what followed was more extraordinary still. Dr. Ferguson requested a gentleman present to take off his coat, and place it on the table. This was done, the light was extinguished, a repetition of the whizzing noise was heard, and the strange coat was found upon the medium, whose hands and feet were still securely bound, and his body tied almost immovably to the chair." Several other manifestations were made, and some while the Davenport brothers, instead of being bound, were held by those present; and all with similar results.

"This manifestation of the taking off a man's coat, and putting on another man's, both garments being intact, with the wrists closely bound together behind the back, and the person securely tied to a chair, is undoubtedly one of the most astounding ever given. It is simply what is called a physical impossibility. It is as if two links of a chain should be separated without a fracture, and then restored to their places. That it was done on this occasion, and has been done scores, perhaps hundreds, of times, there is no doubt whatever.

"All this was done, it will also be observed, not in the presence of ignorant and credulous persons, but in a select company, which included some of the sharpest minds in England; not in a prepared theatre, but in a gentleman's drawing-room, where there could have been no deception, had it been in any case possible.

"After giving the details which I have condensed, the writer in 'The Morning Post' makes the following observations:—

The *séance* lasted more than two hours, during which time the cabinet was minutely inspected, the coats examined to ascertain whether they were fashioned so as to favor a trick, and every possible precaution taken to bind the hands and feet of the persons whose presence appeared to be essential to the development of the manifestations.

It may be asserted that all the illustrations above enumerated can be traced to clever conjuring. *Possibly they may; or it is possible that some new physical force can be engendered at will to account for what appears on the face of it absolutely unaccountable.* All that can be asserted is, that the displays to which we have referred took place on the present occasion *under conditions and circumstances that preclude the presumption of fraud.* It is true that darkness is, in *some cases*, an essential condition; but darkness does not necessarily imply deception. But, putting aside the cabinet manifestations, there is abundance left to excite curiosity, and challenge the attention of the scientific. Learning, we know, is not a limited quantity; it is inexhaustible for all mankind: *and here is a field for the investigation of the scientific world. In the present state of knowledge upon the subject of occult forces, dependent more or less upon the will, all that can be said is, that the manifestations of Messrs. Davenport appear to be altogether inexplicable.*

In a little time, we believe, it is their intention to give *séances* at the Egyptian Hall, or some other suitable place, when the public will be afforded an opportunity of witnessing some of the astonishing feats of which we have given an outline. For the present, it is sufficient to say, that they invite the strictest scrutiny on the part of men of science; and that, whatever be the theory involved, they repudiate any active agency in the production of the extraordinary manifestations which take place in their presence. It is perhaps well for them that they were not in the flesh a century and a half ago, as, in the then state of human knowledge and social enlightenment, they would unquestionably have been conducted to Smithfield, and burnt as necromancers of the most dangerous type.

“The writer of this article, in the most fashionable and aristocratic journal in England, no doubt conferred with the gentlemen of the press and other cool and careful observers then present, and has given their ideas and observations as well as his own. It has every appearance of being a fair, candid, and intelligent statement; and the editor of ‘The Morning Post’ did not shrink from the responsibility of giving it a suitable place in his journal.

“ ‘The Times,’ the leading journal of England, Europe, and the world, — ‘The Thunderer,’ — the paper that more than any other can make and unmake fortunes and reputations; which wields so great a power, that it may be hoped its conductors never forget that great power involves a corresponding responsibility, — ‘The Times’ is said to have been represented on this occasion by one of its ablest writers, but its account of the *séance* is ‘from a correspondent.’ It may seem strange that ‘The Times’ did not publish a report of the personal observations of one of the most trusted and matter-of-fact writers on its staff; but it is well to be wary of impossibilities.

“The correspondent of ‘The Times,’ Sept. 30, says, —

I was present at a *séance*, at the house of Mr. Dion Boucicault, whose party comprised several persons known in the literary and artistic world. Having arrived rather late, I missed some of the earlier “experiments,” which seem to have been extremely curious.

When I entered the room devoted to the “manifestations,” I found it occupied by a number of persons, who attentively listened to a strange discordant concert held within a wardrobe placed at the end farthest from the door. When the sounds had ceased, the wardrobe was opened, and three compartments were discovered, two of which were occupied by the brothers Davenport, bound hand and foot with strong cords, like the most dangerous malefactors. The centre compartment held the musical instruments, and on each side of this sat the corded brothers. The ostensible theory is, that the Davenports, bound as they were, produced a combination of noises, compared to which the performance of the most obtrusive German band that ever awakened the wrath of a Babbage is the harmony of the spheres. The cords are examined, the wardrobe is closed, the instruments are replaced, and presently, through an aperture in the centre door, a trumpet is hurled with violence. The wardrobe is re-opened, and there are the brothers Davenport, corded as before.

A change takes place in the manner of the performance. Hitherto the brothers have remained incarcerated in this box, while the audience are at liberty. They now leave the wardrobe, and take their place in the middle of the room, where they are firmly bound to their chairs. The gentleman who officiates as their lecturer, or spokesman, even offers to drop sealing-wax on the knots, and requests any one of the company to impress it with his own seal. On the evening of my visit this offer was not accepted; but

the fault, if any, lay with the investigators. When the lights had been extinguished, and as we were all seated round the room with hands joined, at the request of the lecturer, a most extraordinary "manifestation" took place. The air was filled with the sound of instruments, which we had seen laid upon a table, but which now seemed to be flying about the room, playing as they went, without the smallest respect to the heads of the visitors. Now a bell jingled close to your ear, now a guitar was struck immediately over your head, while every now and then a cold wind passed across the faces of the whole party. Sometimes a smart blow was administered, sometimes the knee was patted by a mysterious hand; divers shrieks from the members of the company, indicating the side on which the more tangible "manifestations" had taken place. A candle having been lighted, the brothers were seen still bound to their chairs, while some of the instruments had dropped into the laps of the visitors. I myself had received a blow on the face from a floating guitar, which drew enough blood to necessitate the employment of towel and sponge.

A new experiment was now made. Darkness having regained its supremacy, one of the brothers expressed a desire to be relieved of his coat. Returning light showed him in his shirt-sleeves, though his hands were still firmly bound behind his chair. It was now stated that he was prepared to put on the coat of any one of the company willing to loan that article of attire; and, an assenting gentleman having been found, the coat, after a short interval of darkness, was worn in proper fashion by a person for whom it had not been designed by the tailor. Finally, the brothers desired a release; and one of the company, certainly not an accomplice, requested that the rope might fall into his lap. During the interval of darkness a rushing sound, as of swiftly-drawn cords, was audible, and the ropes reached the required knees, after striking the face of the person in the next chair.

Such are the chief phenomena. To sum up the essential characteristics of the exhibition, it is sufficient to state that the brothers, when not shut up in the wardrobe, are bound while the candles are alight, perform their miracles in the dark, and on the return of light are found to be bound as before. The investigators into the means of operation have to ascertain whether the brothers are able to release themselves, and resume their straitened condition during the intervals of darkness, *and whether, even if this is practicable, they can, without assistance, produce the effects described.*

"A clear, brief, evidently honest statement, by a man who would have exposed the slightest indication of imposture, had there been any to expose."

## CHAPTER XXII.

To the remarkable opening *séance* already described, succeeded others, at private houses, and at one of the smaller *salons* of the Queen's Concert-Rooms, Hanover Square; but all were private in the sense that they were attended by persons of scientific, literary, or social distinction, who were specially invited.

One of them, at the residence of Mr. S. C. Hall, well known in the world of literature and art, where the cabinet was not used (which is the "apparatus" referred to below), was attended by, among many others, a well-known man of letters, whose very clear and excellent account of what he heard and saw was, in due time, published by "The Daily Telegraph," as a communication from a "Master of Arts," following the prudent example of other leading journals. This account of the *séance* is so frank and so vivid as to deserve to be given entire, and, whether written by editor or correspondent, is evidently a clear and truthful statement.

## THE BROTHERS DAVENPORT.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE DAILY TELEGRAPH."

Sir, — I was a witness, on Friday evening of last week, to some of the "manifestations" which were exhibited by, or rather occurred in the presence of, the young Americans who have recently come over here. It is well known that they intend to give public *séances* among us, and the more ordinary of these manifestations will soon, therefore, become familiar. There are, nevertheless, circumstances about a private sitting, which make it especially useful for previous criticism, since it takes place in a locality, and amid a society, where deception must be more difficult, while inspection is naturally closer and freer than at a public hall. In the circle, for instance, to which I was invited, the guests were mu-

tually known, and bent upon the sharpest investigation. The host was a man of letters, of a character for truth and gravity which it would be impertinence to eulogize; the scene was an apartment crowded to profusion with delicate works of art, and, therefore, most awkward for any rough conjuring resources; and, finally, the apparatus employed, I understand, elsewhere, was, by the nature of the place, excluded here. These are conditions which cannot be repeated in public: I therefore offer you, sir, as a contribution to the decision which such strange phenomena await, my own observations, stripped of bias, theory, or opinion, and made as I should make them in the witness-box of a court of justice.

*Custodem quis custodiet?* however, — who will testify to the witness? He may be in turn an impostor, may be incapable of calm observation, may be a headlong generalizer; and those with him may have been severally and collectively, like himself, fools or knaves. True, that is possible; but what is not possible is to find evidence not open to these astute objections. I pass them by, therefore, as the inevitable fate of anonymous testimony. *My name will weigh, however, with you, I think, for sincerity and ordinary intelligence;* and, with regard to an acquaintance with the resources of legerdemain, *a long knowledge of jugglers and snake-charmers,* with their budget of tricks, has at least blunted the edge of my wonder upon that score. For my fellow-guests, they, too, were not people upon whom deception could be easily played. Officers of the army and navy, a colonial baronet, a well-known sculptor, a public writer, and others habituated to keep their wits about them, made up, with ladies, the circle of twelve or fifteen present.

The spokesman of the party, indeed, Mr. Ferguson, seems a decidedly "remarkable man," as those who encounter him in metaphysical discussion will probably acknowledge. I pass, however, from metaphysics to what I saw, heard, and felt. We sat in a half-circle, round the side of the drawing-room, Mr. Ferguson being at one end, and one of the Davenports at the other; in the middle, the second brother and the other medium placed themselves upon two ordinary chairs, with a small table between them, on which were laid a guitar, bell, tambourine, and trumpet; while about twelve yards of clothes-line, in two pieces, lay at hand. It was then requested that some of our party should secure each of the sitters, hand and foot, to the chairs with the cord. Mr. Davenport was operated upon by a captain of one of Her Majesty's vessels of war, a distinguished Arctic navigator (Capt. Inglefield). As a yachtsman, I must here plunge so far into technicalities as to say that each ankle of Mr. Davenport was roundly seized up by this gentleman with a "clove-hitch," as also each wrist, — the wrists being fastened to the bar of the chair behind, and the legs made secure by passing the line round and round the foot-bars, and up to meet the wrist-rope, when both were joined with a

“bread-bag knot.” Sailors well know that a “bread-bag knot” can only be imitated by those who comprehend exactly the trick of turning a “reef-knot” into it; in fact, it is the old boatswain’s trap to catch a thief at his biscuit-store. The other medium was made fast less scientifically, but very sufficiently, and the circle was formed in front of the captives. We were specially warned to keep our hands joined while darkness lasted; and the gentlemen at each extremity of the semicircle were duly grasped and held by their neighbors. The lights were then extinguished; and, *in an instant*, there commenced a medley of noises from tambourine, guitar, and bell. These sounded in all parts of the apartment, now high, now low, now here, now there (*simultaneously*, be it observed); and the passage of them through the air could be heard and felt, immensely rapid, and accompanied by *no foot-fall on the floor*. The knees, forehead, and feet of those in the circle were every now and then rapped by the instruments, in a manner boisterous, but harmless; and exclamations of amusement or surprise on our part mingled with the curious Babel. The guitar, especially, passed and repassed, with what was more like flight than ordinary motion, at times violently strummed, at others as gently thrilled as an Æolian harp. At the end of all this, a signal for light was given by taps; and, the apartment being *instantly* illuminated, the prisoners were discovered exactly as they had been last seen, the instruments lying about, or upon the knees of those present. The captain’s sailor-like fastenings were precisely as he had left them, and were declared to have been untouched after our closest examination. The same was the case with the other medium. Hands were then joined, and the lights were once more extinguished; whereupon the same curious and vivacious sounds, motions, and playful rappings re-occurred; and hands, or what appeared such (soft, warm, and well-defined), grasped the joined hands of some, or touched the knees and heads of others. *This interval was very brief indeed*; and then a sound was suddenly heard, of rope being swiftly whisked apart. The light was struck again; and Mr. Davenport was found perfectly free, with his rope festooned about the neck of one of the guests. The whole space of this interval *did not appear at all sufficient for the task* of thus disentangling the captive in toils.

After discussing this marvel or trick, the circle was re-formed, the rope placed on the floor, and the lights re-extinguished. To the same discordant music, and with the same rustling noise, the rope was now heard to be taken up; and in a very short time Mr. Davenport was shown to us more firmly bound than before, in the old position, with a perfect roll of hitches on wrists and ankles and the chair-bars. Again darkness was made, and it was desired that the dress-coat worn by the prisoner should be removed. Certainly — no sooner said than done; for, with a “swish,” something was heard to fly towards the circle; and Mr.



Davenport appeared bound exactly as before, but in his shirt-sleeves, the coat lying between two of those looking on. We had been requested previously to assure ourselves of the integrity of the second set of knots by sealing them. This was not done, but an india-rubber band was twisted in a very peculiar way over the principal knot; and band and knot, so far as the sharpest of us could judge, were absolutely intact after the experiment. *We had either witnessed, therefore, a feat which laughs at the law of "the continuity of matter," resembling that of turning the skin of an orange inside out without breaking it, or we have been duped.* You, sir, must take your choice, as we did, of the alternatives. This was performed with Mr. Davenport's coat, which may give "Wizards of the North and South" the right to smile at what they could certainly, with *some important preparation* beforehand, counterfeit. But afterwards the coat of one of the gentlemen present was taken off and laid on the table; and, with the same "swish" in the dark, it was instantly and accurately adjusted to the back and arms of Mr. Davenport; his wrists being still bound together and still fastened behind him to the chair-back; the knots also being again ascertained to be, so far as could be judged by the closest inspection, unviolated. Again, Mr. Editor, I must present you with the dilemma, upon the horns of which we were tossed: either we had witnessed *an annihilation of what are called "material laws,"* or we were the dupes of extremely clever conjuring.

The last is the explanation, I have perceived, of some professional prestidigitateurs, naturally alarmed for their trade; but, though the "coat-changing trick" is common enough among the "Houdins" and "Andersons" of Europe and Asia, it remains to be seen if they can accept the conditions of it which I have attempted to describe. If they can, it is doubtless prestidigitation which we witnessed; and the darkness is a shield of tricksters, not an atmospheric condition absolutely demanded by the subtle laws of some new and unexplained force. As a candid reporter of the proceedings, I must confess that the verdict of "conjuring" was not that which was pronounced by my companions. But then almost every one was in the habit of seeing and hearing "manifestations," at home or in private residences, of a kind daily familiar now to them, whatever and whencesoever they may be — familiar indeed, I understand, to thousands of persons, but very little spoken of except among the initiated. These would make, however, a bead-roll most surprising to the exoteric, comprising, it is whispered, distinguished statesmen, authors, scientific men, and clergymen, who form together a curious and quiet society, — either the embodiment of a mutual and colossal self-deceit, or *the silent heralds of a social revolution which must shake the world.*

I shall neither report to you the astounding accounts which were given to us of what "had occurred" in the same way, nor the explanations attempted in the conversations that followed.

My wish has been simply to present here what was seen, heard, and felt to happen in a private drawing-room, and among intelligent and careful observers, with serious reasons for detecting a trick, if trick could be detected. The problem is very simple. The "wizards" have only to perform exactly the same things, and whatever more can be done, under the conditions which the brothers Davenport dictate and accept, and the public will agree with their view of what at present is *not* easily explained.

I am, sir, yours, &c.,

MASTER OF ARTS.

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

WE come now to a most important, clear, and authoritative statement.

On the night of Oct. 11, 1864, a very distinguished company assembled at the residence of Mr. Dion Boucicault to witness the manifestations which are given in the presence of the brothers Davenport. It consisted of Viscount Bury, M.P., Sir Charles Wyke, G.C.B., Sir Charles Nicholson, (ambassador to Mexico), the Chancellor of the University of Sydney, the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Queensland, Mr. Robert Bell, Mr. Robert Chambers, LL.D., Mr. Charles Reade, D.C.L., Capt. Inglefield (the arctic navigator), two physicians, and several writers of the daily press, whose names will be found in the following luminous and admirable report of the proceedings by Mr. Boucicault:—

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE DAILY NEWS."

### THE DAVENPORT BROTHERS.

SIR,— A *séance* by the brothers Davenport took place in my house yesterday, in the presence of Lord Bury, Sir Charles Nicholson, Sir John Gardiner, Sir C. Lennox Wyke, Rev. E. H. Newenham, Rev. W. Ellis, Capt. E. A. Inglefield, Mr. Charles Reade, Mr. James Matthews, Mr. Algernon Borthwick, Mr. I. Willes, Mr. H. E. Ormerod, Mr. J. W. Kaye, Mr. J. A. Bostock, Mr. H.

J. Rideout, Mr. Robert Bell, Mr. J. N. Mangles, Mr. H. M. Dunphy, W. Tyler Smith, M.D., Mr. E. Tyler Smith, Mr. T. L. Coward, John Brown, M.D., Mr. Robert Chambers, and Mr. Dion Boucicault.

The room in which the meeting was held is a large drawing-room, from which all the furniture had been previously removed, excepting the carpet, a chandelier, a small table, a sofa, a pedestal, and twenty-six cane-bottomed chairs.

At two o'clock, six of the above party arrived, and the room was subjected to careful scrutiny. It was suggested that a cabinet to be used by the brothers Davenport, but then erected in an adjacent room, should be removed into the front room, and placed in a spot selected by ourselves. This was done by our party; but, in the process, we displaced a portion of this piece of furniture, thus enabling us to examine its material and structure before we mended it. At three o'clock, our party was fully assembled, and continued the scrutiny. We sent to a neighboring music-seller for six guitars and two tambourines, so that the implements to be used should not be those with which the operators were familiar. At half-past three, the brothers Davenport arrived, and found that we had altered their arrangements by changing the room which they had previously selected for their manifestations. The *séance* then began by an examination of the dress and persons of the brothers Davenport; and it was certified that no apparatus or other contrivance was concealed on or about their persons. They entered the cabinet, and sat facing each other. Capt. Inglefield then, with a new rope provided by ourselves, tied Mr. W. Davenport hand and foot, with his hands behind his back, and then bound him firmly to the seat where he sat. Lord Bury, in like manner, secured Mr. I. Davenport. The knots on these ligatures were then fastened with sealing-wax, and a seal was affixed. A guitar, violin, tambourine, two bells, and a brass trumpet, were placed on the floor of the cabinet. The doors were then closed, and a sufficient light was permitted in the room to enable us to see what followed. I shall omit any detailed account of the Babel of sounds which arose in the cabinet, and the violence with which the doors were repeatedly burst open and the instruments expelled; the hands appearing, as usual, at a lozenge-shaped orifice in the centre door of the cabinet. The following incidents seem to us particularly worthy of note: While Lord Bury was stooping inside the cabinet, the door being open, and the two operators seen to be sealed and bound, a detached hand was clearly observed to descend upon him; and he started back, remarking that a hand had struck him. Again, in the full light of the gas chandelier, and during an interval in the *séance*, the doors of the cabinet being open, and while the ligatures of the brothers Davenport were being examined, a very white, thin, female hand and wrist quivered for several seconds in the air above. This appearance drew a

general exclamation from all the party. Sir Charles Wyke now entered the cabinet, and sat between the two young men, his hands being right and left on each, and secured to them. The doors were then closed, and the Babel of sounds recommenced. Several hands appeared at the orifice; among them the hand of a child. After a space, Sir Charles returned amongst us, and stated, that, while he held the two brothers, several hands touched his face and pulled his hair; the instruments at his feet crept up, played round his body and over his head, one of them lodging eventually on his shoulders. During the foregoing incidents, the hands which appeared were touched and grasped by Capt. Inglefield; and he stated, that, to the touch, they were apparently human hands, though they passed away from his grasp.

I omit mentioning other phenomena, an account of which has already been rendered elsewhere.

The next part of the *séance* was performed in the dark. Two ropes were thrown at their feet; and in two minutes and a half they were tied hand and foot, their hands behind their backs, bound tightly to their chairs, and their chairs bound to an adjacent table. While this process was going on, the guitar rose from the table, and swung or floated round the room and over the heads of the party, and slightly touching some. Now a phosphoric light shot from side to side over our heads; the laps and hands and shoulders of several were simultaneously touched, struck, or pawed by hands; the guitar meanwhile sailing round the room, now near the ceiling, and then scuffling on the head and shoulders of some luckless wight. The bells whisked here and there, and a light thrumming was maintained on the violin. The two tambourines seemed to roll hither and thither on the floor, now shaking it violently, and now visiting the knees and hands of our circle; all these foregoing actions, audible or tangible, being simultaneous. Mr. Rideout, holding a tambourine, requested it might be plucked from his hand: it was almost instantaneously taken from him. At the same time, Lord Bury made a similar request; and a forcible attempt to pluck a tambourine from his grasp was made, which he resisted. We then requested that the coat of one of the brothers should be removed. We heard instantly a violent twitch; and here occurred the most remarkable fact. A light was struck before the coat had quite left the brother's person; and it was seen quitting him, plucked off him upwards. It flew up to the chandelier, where it hung for a moment, and then fell to the ground. The brother was seen meanwhile bound hand and foot as before. One of our party now divested himself of his coat, and it was placed on the table. The light was extinguished, and this coat was rushed on to Davenport's back with equal rapidity. During the above occurrences in the dark, we placed a sheet of paper under the feet of these two operators, and drew with a pencil an outline around them, to the end, that, if they moved, it might be detected.

They of their own accord offered to have their hands filled with flour, or any other similar substance, to prove they made no use of them; but this precaution was deemed unnecessary: we required them, however, to count from one to twelve repeatedly, that their voices, constantly heard, might certify to us that they were in the places where they were tied. Each of our own party held his neighbor firmly, so that no one could move without two adjacent neighbors being aware of it.

At the termination of this *séance*, a general conversation took place on the subject of what we had heard and witnessed. Lord Bury suggested that the general opinion seemed to be, that we should assure the brothers Davenport, that, after a very stringent trial and strict scrutiny of their proceedings, the gentlemen present could arrive at no other conclusion than that there was no trace of trickery in any form; and certainly there were neither confederates nor machinery; and that all those who had witnessed the results would freely state in the society in which they moved, that, so far as their investigations enabled them to form an opinion, the phenomena which had taken place in their presence were not the product of legerdemain. This suggestion was promptly acceded to by all present.

Before leaving this question, in which my name has accidentally become mixed up, I may be permitted to observe, that I have no belief in what is called spiritualism, and nothing I have seen inclines me to believe in it: indeed, the puerility of some of the demonstrations would sufficiently alienate such a theory. But I do believe that we have not quite explored the realms of natural philosophy; that this enterprise of thought has of late years been confined to useful invention; and we are content, at least, to think that the laws of nature are finite, ascertained, and limited to the scope of our knowledge. A very great number of worthy persons, seeing such phenomena as I have detailed, ascribe them to supernatural agency; others wander around the subject in doubt; but, as it engages seriously the feeling and earnest thought of so large a number in Europe and America, is it a subject which scientific men are justified in treating with the neglect of contempt?

Some persons think that the requirement of darkness seems to infer trickery. Is not a dark chamber essential in the process of photography? And what would we reply to him who should say, "I believe photography to be a humbug: do it all in the light, and I will believe otherwise, and not till then"? It is true that we know why darkness is necessary to the production of the sun-picture; and, if scientific men will subject these phenomena to analysis, we shall find out why darkness is essential to such manifestations.

I am, &c.,

DION BOUCICAULT.

Having given so much of the testimony of the London newspaper press and its correspondents, respecting the earlier *séances* of the brothers Davenport in England, it may be considered but fair, and it will certainly be amusing, to "hear the other side."

"The Standard" of Oct. 1, 1864, in its leading leader, begs "to suggest that it was all, from beginning to end, a piece of flagrant jugglery." It thinks "it is astonishing to find respectable journals defacing their columns with this ugly trash." It gives all the particulars, notwithstanding, in its largest type and most conspicuous column, and then says, —

When a "floating guitar" has drawn blood, while the brothers remain bound to their chairs, the remedies which irresistibly suggest themselves are those of Bethlehem Hospital. To what are we coming? or, rather, to what are we going? But what, after all, is the social use of these enchanters? They do nothing for us. They cannot trace a pickpocket, or find a lost watch, or reclaim a missing relative. . . . We discard Magus, and we had hoped not to hear of him again, duplicated by the brothers Davenport, with their changing of coats, their miraculous appearance in shirt-sleeves, and their apparatus of ropes, which we trust will be some day more efficaciously employed. . . . Really, an intellectual poison and intoxication have come into fashion on these bewildering subjects; and the public have been dosed so often and so powerfully, that we wish this experimental physician, who prescribes such mysterious drugs, would cut short his visit.

It is pretty evident that this writer tries to think the manifestations are vulgar jugglery; but he finds it hard to keep to that opinion. He suspects they are real, and is a little afraid of them.

"The Spectator" thinks it looks like "a common case of conjuring, managed by a secret entrance into the apartment *behind* the cabinet." But as the room is alight, and the committee passed behind the cabinet or surrounded it, such an explanation would not answer. When persons sit in the cabinet between the brothers, no such aid would be possible.

“The Herald,” Oct. 4, says, —

“An attempt is being made to palm off these brothers Davenport as phenomena. They themselves accept their ludicrous reputation; though as yet we have heard nothing of their doings more extraordinary or dignified than the tricks of a common juggler in the streets of a Chinese theatre, or of a strolling company of Japan. . . . We trust that public curiosity will not encourage the sham. It means, if any thing, that spirits — powers hovering between earth and heaven — help a man off with his coat, tinkle a muffin-bell, play upon banjos, touch people’s knees, rap them on the knuckles, and play a hundred fantastic tricks, which cease immediately upon the lighting of a farthing candle. It is too much!

It is almost “too much” to be begging the whole question in this fashion. The first thing to be decided is, are these things done, and not by the Davenports or other human agency? Who or what does them, and why they are done, will then be the questions next in order. It is not philosophical to say of any phenomenon, “If this occurred, it must have been from such a cause, which is absurd: therefore it never happened.” So many improbable things happen, that we have the proverb, “Truth is stranger than fiction.”

While some of the journals are content to be flippant and sarcastic, “The Daily News” of Oct. 8 is tremendously indignant. In its solemn view of the subject, “it is both surprising and deplorable, that persons of education and standing should not only countenance, but welcome and applaud, such efforts, and that influential organs of opinion should be found ready to give them indirect encouragement, if not positive support.” “The Daily News” asserts that their tricks are vulgar jugglery, such as are commonly performed on both sides of the Atlantic. Then it scolds educated and respectable people for encouraging such impostures. Then it is a re-action from skepticism. Finally, “such miserable trifling with noble emotions is not only utterly unworthy of any serious and manly mind, but must,

in the nature of the case, lead to most injurious results. To divorce any emotion from its true objects and ends is to abuse and degrade it; and to do thus with regard to emotions that lead us beyond the world of sense, tends directly to dry up the most sacred springs of belief and action."

And all this outburst of eloquence and morality about a party of common jugglers, who are doing tricks with which everybody is familiar! It reminds one of the thunder-clap that astonished poor Moses, when he had stolen into a dark corner of a chop-house to eat his bit of bacon.

"The Saturday Review" would be expected, of course, to have something very spicy, or very savage, on so exciting a subject. It could not keep its various nicknames, of "Saturday Reviler," &c., otherwise. It says, "As to the phenomena themselves, any thing so grotesquely absurd, and stupidly meaningless, has not yet been produced, even in the dreary annals of spiritualism." And then, losing its usual pointed vivacity, it goes off, like "The Daily News," into a solemn sermon about "the world of spirits," as if that had any thing to do with the case whatever!

"The John Bull" has heard a story of a "Reverend Dobbs," in Canada, who tied and untied knots, and declared himself ready to do whatever the Davenports did, if they would only lend him their apparatus; the apparatus consisting of a walnut box, some half-inch ropes, and a few not very costly musical instruments.

"The London Review" suggests, "that, until the brothers can be seen bound while the manifestations are occurring, people will believe they have something to do with them;" but as thousands of people have seen the manifestations, and the brothers fast bound, without so much as a second intervening, this goes for very little.

"The Morning Star" says, —

We give an opinion, which we know is not shared by some highly intelligent and candid men, who were present at last night's



performance (the press *séance*), when we say, that it appeared to us tedious, dull, and vulgar. If the exhibition were an avowed display of conjuring cleverness, it would be but a poor and vapid entertainment. Only those who believe it to be performed by some supernatural or extra-natural power can feel any genuine interest in it.

This is, to a certain extent, true. If the manifestations were deceptions, by legerdemain, machinery, and the aid of confederates, they would be very poor and worthless, and the whole London press would have made itself very contemptible by taking so much notice of them.

“The Globe” is rather of this opinion, and talks in a superior manner of—

Two baker’s dozens of accomplished gentlemen, engaged in a dark room in trying to find out how conjurers perform their tricks! What a satire on this enlightened age! . . . We say, let the brother conjurers make their money; but, if they are to be put to the test, let the test be applied, not by men of science, but by a board of conjurers, under a competent chairman. We should then soon know the secret,— a secret not worth knowing.

It has been stated in some of the London papers, that the brothers Davenport were watched closely for a week by Mr. Hermann, one of the cleverest prestidigitateurs and conjurers in America, without being able to get any clew to the secret, and that he became perfectly convinced that no kind of jugglery had any thing to do with it. The suggestion, however, is not a bad one. There are, no doubt, respectable manufacturers of conjuring apparatus, and performers, in London, who, associated with two or three men of science, and a couple of sharp detectives, might find out the “secret not worth knowing.”

It is useless to continue quotations which are to the same purport, and when we have no guaranty of the wisdom, or even of the sincerity, of the writers.

On the whole, “human nature” enters about as largely into the composition of the gentlemen of the press as else-

where. The press is "free" to do what is for its interests, and it is "independent" of whatever will not affect its circulation and influence. Nowhere, probably, is the press less purchasable, or less capable of being directly influenced by base and mercenary considerations; but there is the great public of readers, whose tastes and prejudices must be consulted. Even in free England, it is not always profitable to tell the truth.

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#### CHAPTER XXIV.

IN the "dark ages," the marvels done in presence of the brothers Davenport would have been referred by a large majority of the people to necromancy or witchcraft. In these enlightened days, all those who do *not* care to examine ascribe them at once to legerdemain, and the mechanical deceptions of professional jugglers, or so-called conjurers. Of course, at this day, and in this country, no one out of the nursery believes in magic, as it was anciently believed in everywhere, and still is over the Eastern world.

Most people have been amused, and perhaps astonished, at the tricks of our modern magicians, who fry pancakes in hats, make cards or money dance, pour all kinds of liquors out of a single bottle, shoot gold watches into the centre of uncut oranges, and so on. These tricks are amusing, and, until we know the *modus operandi*, they are surprising. It is not strange, that those who cannot account for the Davenport manifestations, and who also know but little about them, should class them with such performances.

It is not strange, either, that as soon as the various "professors" of these magical arts found the phenomena attending the brothers Davenport noticed in the leading

papers of England, as their amusing, but not especially wonderful performances were not likely to be, they should endeavor to take advantage of this kind of publicity, and of the excitement these wonders had produced. And if the "professors" believed that the Davenports were mere jugglers, like themselves, they had also a right to be indignant, as would every one, that they were gaining notoriety, and perhaps money, under false pretences. I cheerfully admit, that it would be right, and perhaps the duty of every magician in England, to expose such a base and infamous deception; and they could not do it too speedily.

The brothers Davenport had scarcely appeared in London, before Prof. Anderson, then performing at St. James's Hall, declared that they were "very clever young *artistes*, who have been performing the rope-tying trick, bell-ringing, trumpet-flying, and changing-coat experiments, all of which my son is exhibiting at the present time in America by natural agency only." Then came "M. Tolmaque, prestidigitateur," declaring that "he could do the same things as the Davenports, in the same manner," and offering to show a committee how they were done, if the Davenports would do the same. An "Officer of the Army" offered to take off his jacket, without removing his coat; but when he was required to have his hands tied together, like the Davenports, he respectfully declined.

The brothers Davenport met the statement of Prof. Anderson fairly and squarely, as follows:—

308 REGENT STREET, Oct. 8, 1864.

SIR,—Having read your letter in "The Morning Post" of Saturday last, we beg to accept the challenge made or implied in that communication. We are ready to appear before a party of twelve or more gentlemen, specially chosen as capable of fairly investigating the phenomena we present. You shall be present, and shall have every facility given you to examine the empty room and the instruments we use. You shall then explain, to the satisfaction of the gentlemen present, the legerdemain you have

stated we employ, or produce, if you can, in your own person, the same results. Should you succeed by legerdemain in performing or imitating those results, or be able to detect and expose imposture, we shall then be ready to acknowledge that your accusations are justly founded. But if you fail, as we are well assured you will do, we shall require you to retract publicly the accusations you have publicly made against us.

We are, &c., BROTHERS DAVENPORT.

To PROFESSOR ANDERSON, St. James's Hall.

The professor denied that he had given any challenge. It would be impossible for even a professor of legerdemain to back more coolly out of a difficulty.

A similar letter was sent to "M. Tolmaque, prestidigitateur;" and he also declined the encounter in the same manner.

These two magicians did *not* so with their enchantments.

Finally, to cover the whole ground, the following letter was written, and, like the others, published in "The Morning Post" (Oct. 8, 1864):—

LONDON, Oct. 4, 1864.

SIR,—The *séance* which took place in your house, and in the presence of yourself and friends, last Wednesday evening, has given rise to much discussion, in which we have been pronounced by some not only jugglers, but impostors (say jugglers, and therefore impostors). Two professed conjurers have publicly announced that they can produce, by legerdemain, all the phenomena we have exhibited. We accept the challenge, and shall feel obliged if a committee of gentlemen of character and position can be found, selected from such as are quite free from any prejudice in the matter. A *séance* shall then take place in a room which may be examined beforehand, and with instruments to be furnished by the committee. We are prepared to produce there certain phenomena in the presence of these gentlemen, and in the presence of the two conjurers; and, when we have done, the conjurers shall be required to attempt to produce the same, under the same conditions, or shall expose, to the satisfaction of the committee, the fraudulent means we are stated to have employed: but this they shall do by the exercise and exhibition of legerdemain (or, if they please, by machinery), and not by any occult power of the nature of that we possess, and which they might use in secret, and then repudiate; for we do not pretend that we have the exclusive possession of the power we employ.

We trust, sir, in fairness to us and to those who believe in our honesty, that the test will be fairly and strictly applied, and the result, whatever it may be, made public.

We make this offer in all sincerity and good faith; and we hope it will be met and dealt with in the same spirit.

We are yours truly,

IRA ERASTUS DAVENPORT.  
WILLIAM H. DAVENPORT.

TO DION BOUCICAULT, Esq.

This fair and open challenge, which has simple good faith written in every sentence, and which in the latter portion shows the extent of it in a very curious manner, met with no response from the magicians.

A correspondent of "The Morning Post" asks of M. Tolmaque, who gave an exhibition of tying and untying himself, very clever, no doubt, but not at all to the purpose, Can he, dressed in black, and holding powdered chalk or flour in his hands, effect both the phenomena of tying and untying the ropes, as exhibited by the brothers Davenport, and in the same space of time, without dropping any of the flour from his hands? Can he produce visible and palpable hands, distinctly and unequivocally human to outward sight and touch, ending at the wrist, without wires or rods or human arms connected with them? The writer offers to pay any sum he may name to any prestidigitateur who can do these things, on condition, that, failing, he will give a quarter of the sum to some charity.

Professor Anderson, instead of accepting any of these offers, challenged the brothers to do their "tricks" in his theatre, in full light, instead of darkness; knowing perfectly well that total darkness in some cases, and partial obscurity in others, was usually an indispensable condition, and, so far as can be known, one of the laws of the phenomena, — as much so, perhaps, as in the camera obscura. If the things done in the absence of light could be done in its presence, the cabinet and ropes, sealing-wax, flour, straps

of diachylon, and all other tests, might be dispensed with, though it may be doubted if people would more readily believe.

M. Tolmaque declined the challenge, on the ground that he would have nothing to do with works of darkness.

Mr. Palmer was not quite satisfied with the backing-out of the prestidigitateurs. He was nettled, perhaps, that a portion of the press persisted in declaring that the magicians had solved the problem and exposed the cheat, when they had refused the fairest opportunities to do so, with all the glory that would have attended such an achievement. Mr. Palmer, therefore, on the 22d of October, published the following:—

If M. Tolmaque or any other person will, by legerdemain, produce precisely the same phenomena as those to which the brothers Davenport give rise, under precisely the same conditions, to the satisfaction of a majority of the noblemen and gentlemen who were present at the *séance* held last Friday evening at the Hanover-square Rooms, I will pay £100 to any of the dramatic funds that may be selected; the party, of course, attempting, should he fail, to pay a like sum to the same institution.

The dramatic funds vainly watch and wait for that hundred pounds; but the response of M. Tolmaque is a curiosity. He writes (“Morning Star,” Oct. 24),—

I, M. Tolmaque, prestidigitateur, hereby inform Mr. Palmer, that, as long as he sails under false colors, I will not answer him, or any of his friends, on the subject of the brothers Davenport.

M. TOLMAQUE.

And this, I believe, ended the pretences of the magicians, who, not being able to do so with their enchantments, gave curious experiments of their own, and untied knots at the music-halls.

This feat of untying knots is old and familiar enough, and is just what the brothers Davenport do *not* do. To

prove this, they allow the ropes to be sealed ; to prove it, they hold both their hands filled with flour or other white powder ; to prove it, they have been sewed up in bags, enclosed in wooden tubes, and subjected to all the tests mentioned in these pages, and a hundred beside. What they wish to show is, that they neither untie nor tie themselves, and that they do none of the remarkable things done in their presence.

The same power or powers that show the hands without arms, or hands and arms where no bodies are visible ; which play on the instruments ; which hurl the guitar sounding through the air ; which remove a coat from, or put one upon, a man whose hands are bound securely together ; the same power ties and unties the brothers Davenport, when they are placed beyond the aid of confederates, and equally prevented (by the flour-test, for example) from doing it themselves.

Mr. Palmer might very safely have offered the magicians themselves a thousand, or ten thousand, pounds to do one of these things by jugglery, under the same conditions.

The tyings and untyings at the theatres and music-halls may be ingenious tricks enough ; but it is very absurd to compare them with what is seen at the *séances* of the brothers Davenport.

It should be observed, that this conflict with the conjurers is not a new thing with the brothers. It began ten years ago, when they were but children, and when the phenomena were quite as extraordinary as they are to-day. They have been watched by the cleverest jugglers, who failed to discover the semblance of trickery. They have everywhere challenged every kind of test, and the most searching examinations. No magician has ever ventured to accept their standing challenge to exhibit the same phenomena under the same conditions.

Observe, also, that the so-called magicians never interfere

with each other, never challenge each other. Each does as well as he can, and no one ever attempts to expose another's tricks. They do all they can, however, to throw discredit on the Davenports; not because they can, but because they *cannot*, do the same or even similar things. The London press, while giving credit to the skill of Prof. Anderson, has very frankly declared that his pretended imitation or exposure of the Davenports is simply absurd. There is not the least resemblance. When Prof. Anderson's coat is taken off his back, while his hands are securely fastened behind him with cord, or tape and sealing-wax, or copper wire, or diachylon plaster, or by wires passing through holes in his thumb and finger-nails, or by several of these means in combination, under the inspection of a competent and impartial committee, he may talk about "an exhibition after the manner of the brothers Davenport."

On this matter, the following extract from a communication in "The Newcastle Chronicle" (Nov. 7, 1864) is to the purpose. The writer, after describing the favorable impressions made upon him by the brothers and their companions, so different from what certain of the London papers had led him to expect, says, —

I have only this remark to make. I have seen nearly all the greatest conjurers of the present day. I have been behind the scenes, and assisted in making the necessary preparations for a wizard's entertainment. I have seen both M. Tolmaque and Mr. Redmond do their rope-trick; and I know how it is done. I can honestly declare, that what the Davenports do as far surpasses Anderson, Tolmaque, and Redmond, as these gentlemen can surpass such a clumsy amateur as I am. I am totally at a loss to account for the Davenports' feats by any known principle of legerdemain. If what they do is conjuring, all I can say about it is, that it is the cleverest conjuring I ever saw or heard of.



## CHAPTER XXV.

TEN weeks had elapsed since the arrival of the brothers in London, and the city was in a state of intense excitement and wonder. The marvellous manifestations had become a general topic of conversation, even in miscellaneous gatherings. The twelve inside passengers of an omnibus, running one morning from Bayswater to the Bank, found it a sufficiently important theme for their conversation; and the party were sadly divided in their opinions, all expressed with equal certainty. The first considered that the Davenports were simply conjurers, and, therefore, gross impostors and scoundrels. Another, that the manifestations were no conjuring or sleight of hand, but the direct work of the Devil, who made use of them for his own ordinary purposes. The third disagreed with both the others, and believed that it was a development of what is called spiritualism. While a fourth, feeling that he knew nothing about it, was content to say so, and willing to wait for more light before joining either party. With the exception of the last individual, the other parties represented the divisions of public opinion throughout London.

The leading papers had pronounced authoritatively that they were conjurers, who, after much practice, had learned some tricks, but, as some of them affirmed, *infinitely less clever and inexplicable* than those of Houdin, Frikell, and Anderson. But how did that statement consort with the facts of the case? None of these conjurers had come forward to claim the hundred pounds reward offered by Mr. Palmer "to any person or persons who can be found capable of producing the same results, under the same conditions, by legerdemain." M. Tolmaque had attempted to stand

on his dignity, but fell off ingloriously even in the estimation of his backers of the Stock Exchange. If any one of the conjurers were not strong enough of himself to find out the trick, why did not half a dozen of the leading conjurers join together in a company ("limited") to expose the Davenport impostors, and extract this one hundred pounds from their disgraceful pockets? There were Prof. Taylor, Prof. Anderson, M. Tolmaque, Mr. Redmond, Mr. Sutton, and Mr. Iawaka, "the great Indian rope-performer and spiritualist," who had been much exercised upon the subject, and had done their best to expose it; but they, one and all, signally failed in making more than one step towards it. They had, with occasional failures, untied themselves; and, in a long time, they had tied themselves; and that was the end of them: but one and all declined sealed knots and proper tying; whilst all the real wonders of the Davenports, and which their tying is only one of the means to secure against fraud, were left unattempted, even, by the conjurers.

The chosen ground, then, of the press and the public, was seen to be failing them. At first, it was said to be very stupid conjuring; and, next, it was very clever conjuring. The conjurers had had ten weeks to perfect their arrangements; they had the money of the Stock Exchange at their back, and the huzzas of applauding literature and science to lead them on to victory; Mr. Palmer's hundred pounds as a material trophy; and, above all, their own prestige, and the good name of England, to maintain and establish. Could stronger incentives or a fairer field be given them? And yet they failed, utterly failed. They confess it, and the press recorded it to their discomfiture. The magnificent hopes which they raised, and the splendid promises they made to their patrons, ended in some stale feats of tying and untying, which not in the least degree touch the phenomena of the brothers.

In proof of the revulsion which now took place in public

sentiment, we quote several extracts from some of the very papers which had, at first, been most contemptuous of the alleged "conjuring" by the Davenport brothers.

Mr. Charles Kenney in "The Standard," who, under the signature "Incredulous Odi," had said that he could not "*adventure an exact explanation of how the things were done, as the modus operandi is at present an immature conception in my brain; but I have a shrewd guess at it,*" now wrote, after witnessing Anderson's performances, that "*the original demonstrations remain as inexplicable as ever, on the precise grounds taken up by the Professor.*" In a second notice of Mr. Anderson, Mr. Kenney says, "Now, this is all very clever; but it is not equal to the performance of Mr. Redmond at Astley's, nor does it go any considerable length towards unravelling the mystery surrounding the Davenport brothers. We must wait till Miss Anderson has had a very great deal more practice *before we can look upon her as proving any thing whatever about the Davenport séances.*"

In a third article, devoted to M. Tolmaque, and after noticing Tolmaque's refusal to be bound by Capt. Burton, the celebrated African traveller, who had repeatedly bound the Davenports, he says, "If the proof or disproof of a spiritual or any other unnatural agency were to rest only on the rival feats of the conjurers who have stepped forward to emulate the mysteries of tying and untying, *it is not clear but that we should have to accept the theory that these American youths are indeed the passive conductors of a force not hitherto studied by our Faradays or Groves.* So far as the efforts of these antagonists have gone, the Davenport ghost has certainly not yet been laid, and least of all by the exhibition of Herr Tolmaque. . . . The conjurers must not attempt to challenge any thing like a close comparison with the Davenport brothers, *whose performances, after the most strenuous and successful efforts of their rivals, must candidly be allowed to remain as inexplicable as ever.*"

There are several notices to the same effect in "The Telegraph," whilst Mr. Edwin Arnold, still in the guise of "a correspondent," puts the question between the Davenports and the conjurers as follows: "It must be the remark of all good observers, that while the performances are attributed by their critics to conjuring, and challenged as conjuring by the conjurers themselves, no spectator has yet offered any other explanation of them except sarcasm, *whilst professional gentlemen like M. Tolmaque and Mr. Anderson have produced nothing but a travesty of the manifestations; for the imitations hitherto publicly described omit just the most puzzling features of this odd American exhibition.*" He then quotes from the *Pneumatologie* of the Marquis de Mirville, addressed to the

Academy of Paris, an account of a visit of M. Houdin to Alexis, the famous clairvoyant, at the end of which Houdin made the following remarkable declaration to the Marquis: "Monsieur, I am a conjurer; and, if there be a conjurer in the whole world who can show such marvels, *it would confound me a thousand times more, — being one myself, — than to admit the mysterious agency to which you have introduced me.*" Fifteen days afterwards, when the matter had been turned over again and again in Houdin's mind, he wrote a letter to the marquis, of which this is the closing sentence: "I returned as astonished as a man could be, and quite persuaded that neither chance nor conjuring could have produced effects so bewildering." Mr. Edwin Arnold concludes his letter by saying, "I offer this as a contribution towards fact, since it shows that a greater wizard than any at present existing, the inventor indeed of the simple secret of Mr. Anderson's second-sight, encountered 'manifestations' which he could not explain, and, what is almost stranger, had the honesty to confess it."

In "The Morning Star," Mr. Edmund Yates, comparing the Davenports and Mr. Redmond, and after stating what was done by each, and which, so far as Redmond was concerned, was merely a repetition of his rope-trick, says, "Beyond the *rope-tying*, the two exhibitions have nothing in common."

"The Morning Post" definitively pronounces against the conjurers in a series of notices.

Mr. Hollinshead, of "The Daily News," descended from his original high position of lamenting over the folly of London in running after the Davenports, and became a constant visitor at their *séances*, being frequently a member of the committees both of the brothers and the conjurers; and he has several times published his decision, that the conjurers are nowhere in the race, and even that "it is possible, that, in the tricks performed by the Davenports, they will be able to hold their own against all comers."

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## CHAPTER XXVI.

To give a full account of all the remarkable phenomena that occurred in London during the brief stay of the brothers Davenport, would require a volume. We present the testimony of Capt. Richard F. Burton, the distinguished African traveller, addressed to Dr. J. B. Ferguson: —

As you are aware, I have now witnessed, under advantageous circumstances, four of the so-called "dark *séances*." These were all in private houses, one of them in my own lodgings. We sedulously rejected all believers, and chose the most skeptical and hard-headed of our friends and acquaintances, some of whom had prepared the severest tests. We provided carefully against all possibility of "confederates," bolting the doors, &c., and brought our own cords, sealing-wax, tape, diachylon, musical instruments (harmonicon, bird-whistle, tambourine, bells), &c.

The results of the *séances* were almost invariably the same. After the two strongest "mediums" had been tied up, hands and feet, by us, you suddenly extinguished the light; we then, the darkness being complete, sat in a semicircle, fronting the mediums, each holding his neighbor's arm or hand, and each warned not to break the chain. On one occasion, I placed my feet on one of the medium's, while Mr. B., the master of the house, did the same to the other; and we measured their distance from the semicircle, — ten feet.

Within two seconds (I speak advisedly) after the candle was put out, the musical instruments, placed on the table between the two mediums, began to shudder and tremble. Presently, the guitar-strings commenced twanging, as if badly played with a single finger, and the instrument went round the semicircle with the velocity of a bird, fanning our cheeks as it passed. The prettiest effect was to hear it buzzing in the distance, as a humming-bee would sound when flying away. If the guitar happened to be in a good humor, the instrument patted our heads softly, or lay on our laps, or thrust itself into our hands. If the "spirits" were displeased, the manifestations were decidedly rough. I received once a rather severe contusion with the tip of the guitar, when the heavy bells and the tambourine struck the ground and the table with a noise and force that suggested the kick of a horse on a splashboard. Presently the sounds cease, the candle is re-lit, we run up to the mediums, we find them in our own cords, taped with our own tape, sealed with our own seals, and perhaps plastered with diachylon strip. Every one inquires how it was done, and no one answers; and not a few are clearly and palpably frightened. The honest declare themselves puzzled.

The most remarkable manifestations that occurred in my presence were the following: A tumbler of water, placed on the table, with a bird-whistle in it, was thrown on the carpet at my feet, without noise or breakage; a dry, hot, and rough hand, on one occasion, felt my hands, fell on my face, and then pulled my mustaches, and, finally, thrust between my lips a cigar, taken from the mantel-piece; my legs have also been twitched, and my head patted. My neighbor, in the same *séance*, felt a cold, clammy, and feminine hand, screwed up at times like a bird's claw, running over her face, and evidently with a large portion of the arm rest-

ing on her head. Sparks of red and pale fire have fallen from the ceiling, sometimes perpendicularly, at other times crossing the room, and coming from a point apparently higher than the ceiling. The medium's coat was removed, whilst he was securely fastened hand and foot, and a lucifer match was struck at the same instant, showing us the two gentlemen, fast bound, and the coat in the air, on its way to the other side of the room. Under precisely similar circumstances, the coat of another gentleman present was placed upon him. A gruff voice repeatedly addressed me and others. There are many other, for which you have not space, of my own "experiences." A lady, whose veracity I have no reason to doubt, and who is supposed to have strong mesmeric powers, assured me that she perceived the musical instruments floating high in the air, or wriggling along the floor. Being able to see them in a dark room, she imagined that we had applied to them phosphorized oil, which we had not. On the same occasion, she distinguished the outline of a figure, which stooped slightly, and not, as she thought, that of any one in the room.

I have spent a great part of my life in Oriental lands, and have seen there many magicians. Lately, I have been permitted to see and be present at the performances of Messrs. Anderson and Tolmaque. The latter showed, as they profess, clever conjuring: but they do not even attempt what the Messrs. Davenport succeed in doing; for instance, the beautiful management of the musical instruments. Finally, I have read and listened to every explanation of the Davenport "tricks," hitherto placed before the English public, and, believe me, if any thing would make me take the tremendous jump "from matter to spirit," it is the utter and complete unreason of the reasons with which the "manifestations" are explained.

Believe me, ever yours truly, &c.,

RICHARD F. BURTON.

At Capt. Goff's rooms, there were present ten or twelve persons, including two of the gallant captain's female acquaintances, one of whom was tolerably staid in her manners; the other, a handsome young woman, entered into the affair pretty much in the same spirit of fun and revelry as characterized the men.

The Davenports were tied by Mr. Lindau, in a way which was more severe and intricate, they said, than they had been tied on any previous occasion in London. The rope was passed and tightly bound round their arms, so much so as to discolor the skin; then round their wrists,

bringing their arms straight down by the sides of the chair, instead of behind their backs; the ends of the ropes, being unravelled, were brought beneath the chair, and there tied in a number of small knots. This very elaborate and ingenious method of tying impressed the young men with the idea that Mr. Lindau was a professional hand; but they were in error: he had only been taking lessons from Herr Tolmaque, the conjurer, who had no doubt assured him that the Davenports could not get out if tied in that particular manner; the inference being, that *he* could not, had he been so bound. The company, being asked if they were satisfied, assented, and showed, by significant gestures, that they were more than certain that they had at length got these young "conjurers" in a fix from which they were not very likely to be extricated, without appealing to the mercy of the gentleman who had bruised their flesh in showing his dexterity in the art of rope-tying.

The lights being put out, the musical instruments were carried about in the usual way. The young lady, in the exuberance of fun and skepticism, threw herself on the floor, and flinging about her arms, as she afterwards acknowledged, tried to catch the invisibles as they passed the instruments over and around the assembled guests. The time at length came for the liberation of the captives, which, to the evident surprise and chagrin of all, was accomplished, though occupying two or three minutes more than usual. At the same moment, with three quick movements (as described by one of the gentlemen), he and the "young lady" were tied by the invisible operators together by their legs, the cord being fastened with a knot above the lady's knee, close to her skin. She could not remove it herself, and Mr. Ferguson had to perform the delicate operation of liberating her. The young "conjurers" escaped detection on this as on all other occasions; and Mr. Lindau, in speaking of the events of the evening to a friend of mine,

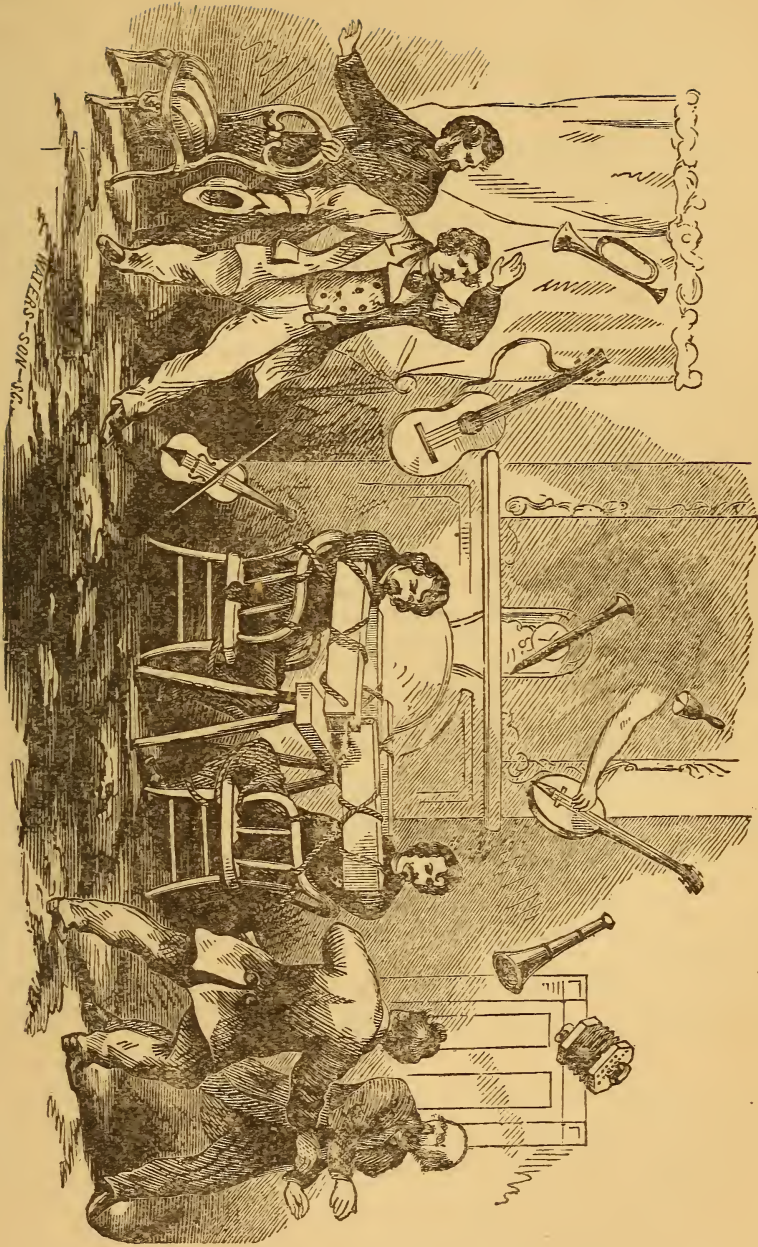
frankly admitted that "the performance was very clever." He did not mention *the* most clever "trick" of the evening, which possibly had escaped his memory.

At the Hanover Assembly Rooms, in the presence of about seventy persons, during the dark *séance*, while the instruments were flying about in the usual manner, one of the audience, who was seated about the centre, in the front row, lighted a wax-taper, which fully illumined the room, and showed the young men passively seated, and fast bound to their chairs, as they had been left. This act, committed by a well-dressed young man, was in violation of express conditions, not for covering fraud, as Mr. Ferguson said, but to protect the audience, and more especially the mediums, from the forcible rebound of the instruments. The precaution was evidently a necessary one; for on this occasion one guitar was instantly dashed at the feet of the delinquent, and the other flew back, striking one of the brothers on his knee. Nothing could have happened more satisfactorily to disprove the imputations which the conjurers allege, and the general public believe, that the guitars are wielded by the brothers, fast bound as they are known to be, or by their supposed confederates.

The audience resented this outrage; and the young gentleman was compelled to leave the room, which he did amidst an outburst of cheers for the Davenportes.

In a private room of a hotel in Manchester, in the presence of Mr. Ferguson and a gentleman from London, there occurred some curious evidences of the powers of invisible beings. The poker was taken from the fireplace, and carried across the room, and placed upon the canopy over a bed. A small closed box was placed under the table at which they were sitting, by the gentleman above referred to; and on opening it, after a few moments, an inscription was found written on the inside of the cover, which had not been there previously. To be sure that no trick had been







practised upon him, the gentleman went immediately to a shop, and bought another box, which he securely fastened, and placed under the table. On opening it, a similar and more startling inscription was found written.

Willing to experiment further, the gentleman poured a glass of spirits into a tumbler, and held it under the table. The tumbler appeared to be touched, and moved as if some one were drinking; and, when the tumbler was brought into the light, the liquid had vanished. The closest inspection of the carpet did not show that a drop had been spilled. This experiment was repeated three times, with the most careful examination in each instance, the tumbler also being held by different persons. The room was lighted; and the falling sides of the table-cover were repeatedly raised by what seemed to be hands beneath.

It does not follow, from this fact of the disappearance of liquids, that invisible beings drink, any more than that they are nourished by earthly food, because, as previously related in this volume, they seem to eat. It has been abundantly proved, that substances, both solid and liquid, are apparently created by invisible forces; and they as certainly cause them to disappear. Heat changes solids into liquids, and liquids into gases or invisible vapors. There is needed only a suspension of the attraction of the atoms of matter to each other, or an increase of repulsion, in other words, a change in the action of certain forces, to cause the instant disappearance, or seeming annihilation, of all visible objects.

But no manifestation connected with the brothers Davenport, and others similarly gifted, has seemed to the editor of this work so remarkable, as the fact that the intelligences which attend them are able to speak with a human voice, and hold conversations in articulate language. This fact has been attested by Mr. Ferguson, by Mr. Coleman, and many others. Such conversations have been heard by

scores of persons in England, and by hundreds in America.

Dr. T. L. Nichols, the distinguished writer upon physiology and hygiene, thus testifies: —

“The case in which I heard such a conversation between men in the flesh, and an invisible, intelligent being, was of a character that deserves to be carefully recorded; and in the interests of science I wish to make a faithful record of my observations.

“On the evening of Feb. 28, 1865, I received a telegram from Dr. Ferguson, asking me to come to room 120, Great Western Hotel, Paddington. I took a cab, found him at the place appointed, and heard from him an account of the riot at Leeds the night before.

“The two Davenports came into the room. An English gentleman of property, residing in the hotel, interested in a scientific examination of the phenomena attending the brothers, was also present.

“When the matter of the riots and outrages at Liverpool, Huddersfield, and Leeds, had been discussed, and we had consulted on the steps proper to be taken in view of so violent an opposition, the brothers, Ira and William, proposed that ‘John’ (the name by which they designate what seems to be the chief of the invisible intelligences attending them) should be invited to take part in the council.

“The conditions necessary to an oral converse with the invisible ‘John’ were darkness and a speaking-trumpet (horn, tube of pasteboard, in short, a small, hard tube). The gentleman above mentioned, whom I will designate as Mr. X., volunteered to go in search of such an instrument. In his absence the window was darkened, and the fire in the grate extinguished. He returned with the only thing of the kind he could find, — a common tin funnel. This was placed upon a small table. The two brothers, Ira and William, sat on each side; Mr. X. reclined upon a couch; and

Mr. Ferguson and I sat fronting the brothers, some six feet distant. The door had been locked, and the light was extinguished.

“Observe, that here was no question of money, and no interest to deceive. The brothers, for their own sake, wished to ask about the riots, and to be advised respecting the course to be taken in an emergency. Mr. Ferguson had the same interest; while Mr. X. and myself were the only other persons present, and neither of us had any interest but curiosity. I would observe, also, that I was thoroughly acquainted with the peculiarities of the voices of every person present. As a physiologist, and as an elocutionist and musician, I have studied the voice and its capabilities. I also understand ventriloquism, and can produce all its illusions.

“The light had not been extinguished twenty seconds, when the tin funnel was heard to rattle on the table, and a voice, at first coarse and indistinct, came from it. Mr. Ferguson said that he was touched several times, both with the funnel and what appeared to be the hand of some person; and two large, soft finger-ends, as they seemed to me, were pressed deliberately upon the back of my hand.

“Then commenced a conversation between *the voice* and Mr. Ferguson, and sometimes Ira. The voice was formed in the funnel, for its metallic ring could be distinguished; but it seemed to be formed, not at the small end, but where it begins to broaden. The words were well formed, and clearly articulated, but as if by organs somewhat thick and soft, a little like those of a fat person or a negro. Statements were made, questions answered, and advice given. I do not care to report the words. The persons interested, Mr. Ferguson and the two Davenports, were told that they would probably meet with more difficulties, but that they would be protected as they had been.

“The voice was not that of any of the persons in the

room. It was not the ventriloquial voice. Every voice has its own character. Every observing person can distinguish an educated from an ignorant man, a well-bred from a vulgar man, by the tones of the voice and modes of enunciation. Many shades of character are revealed by the speech. Many think the ear judges better than the eye. The blind are thought by some to be as well able to judge of character as those who see. For my own part, I can never form a satisfactory idea of a person until I have heard him.

“This voice, then, was that of no person I had ever seen. It was that of a plain, sensible, common man, rather below the middle class in culture, but earnest, and, if one could so pronounce from a voice, honest. If, the room being dark and the door unlocked, a stranger had entered and spoken in the same way, I should have considered him a plain, practical, earnest, well-meaning man, who might be a master-mechanic, mariner, or man of business in any similar occupations.

“I watched carefully, not only every tone and inflection of this voice, but the place from which it seemed to come. It was not more than four feet from me, in front of Mr. Ferguson, and not above a yard from the floor. When the last word had been said, and a candle lighted, Mr. Ferguson sat still, with his hands clasped together, resting on his knees, and the funnel was seen placed over them. It is very certain that not one of the five persons present had moved from their seats. It is as certain that the funnel was brought from the table by some force and volition not belonging to either of them; and I am as certain as it is possible to be of any fact whatever, that the voice, distinctly heard in a conversation of ten or fifteen minutes' duration, was not that of any one of the only five persons present.”

## CHAPTER XXVII.

WE come now to a chapter in the experiences of the brothers, which, for the credit of English character, we wish might never have had cause to be recorded. But the truth of history demands that the essential character of that brutal spirit which inspired the ruffianly mobs to their outrageous attacks should be revealed to the public. It must be remembered, that the brothers had landed in England while a sanguinary war was raging in their native land, that involved the very life of the nation. The English people, as a whole, were in undoubted and undisguised sympathy with the slave-holders' rebellion; and Northern men were constantly subject to insult and abuse, wherever and whenever their patriotic proclivities were known. Quiet attention to one's own business, or studied avoidance of the vexed question in dispute between the North and the South, did not shield any person from incivilities when it became known that he was from the hated North.

It was soon known, of course, that the young Americans were Northerners; and although they never sought occasion to proclaim their patriotism among an unfriendly people, neither did they ever swerve from or deny their loyalty to the government which they loved, and the glorious old flag under which they were born. This was enough for the rabble, who, under other circumstances, might have tolerated the Devil himself if he had proposed to astonish them by his powers, but who could not and would not tolerate the hated "Yankees," if they could find the shadow of a pretext against them.

Thus, it was not merely natural incredulity as to uncommon phenomena, or even religious bigotry, which they were obliged to encounter, but the intense hatred of an ignorant

or prejudiced people, whose traditions had prepared them to believe, that, if America could be broken to pieces, the prosperity and power of England would be augmented. This is not the place to inquire into the philosophy of such a sentiment; but that it existed everywhere, and became among the lower classes of English people, especially in the cities and in the north of England, an intense hatred to loyal Americans, none can truthfully deny.

The brothers had made a provincial tour in Yorkshire and Lancashire, attended with marked success and fair treatment, especially by the press of the towns they visited, until they arrived at Liverpool, where, after giving a private *séance*, and obtaining the usual manifestations (which were stated by "The Liverpool Post" to have been "most strange and entirely unaccountable"), they had public exhibitions. After the first of these, it appears that the persons who despaired of exposing them by argument, organized a violent physical attack upon them, which ended in a riot, and the destruction of the cabinet. The history of this occurrence, and the subsequent riots at Huddersfield and Leeds, are carefully stated in the following address of the brothers Davenport to the British public, which was prepared for and published in the leading English papers:—

#### THE BROTHERS DAVENPORT TO THE BRITISH PUBLIC.

We appeal to the free press and the enlightened and fair-dealing people of the British Empire for a candid consideration of the following statement, and for the even-handed justice usually given in this country to all persons, rich or poor, citizens or strangers. We ask also, as a matter of justice, that journals which have published accounts of the recent riots at Liverpool, Huddersfield, and Leeds, of which we were the victims, should also give the facts contained in this statement.

We beg, furthermore, most respectfully to commend to the consideration of the Right Honorable Sir George Grey, and the magistracy and police authorities of the United Kingdom, the fact, that within two weeks, in three of the most important provincial towns in England, without any fault of our own, transgressing no



law of the realm, and offering no violence or injury to any person, we have been made to suffer in property, and have been menaced with extreme personal injury, with apparent danger to our lives, as will appear by the following statement of facts :—

After having given over two hundred public and private *séances*, or exhibitions of physical phenomena, such as have been described in all the leading journals of Europe and America, and in our published biography, at the Queen's Concert Rooms, London, and the mansions of the nobility and gentry of England, we visited Liverpool on the 13th of February, and, as is our custom, gave a private *séance*, to which the members of the press and others were invited, who reported the satisfactory character of the exhibition. Feb. 14, we gave two public *séances* at St. George's Hall with like results; a private *séance* at a gentleman's mansion, and a public morning performance on Tuesday, were alike satisfactory.

On Tuesday evening, we were proceeding with another exhibition, when two persons, a Mr. Hulley and a Mr. Cummins, acting as a committee from the audience, in attempting to tie our wrists, caused so much pain that we were compelled to protest against the torture they were inflicting. We were willing to be tied with entire security, as we have been many hundreds of times by riggers, sailors, engineers, and other skilled persons, or to give any reasonable test in proof that we have no active part in the phenomena witnessed in our presence: we had no fear of a "tom-fool knot," or of any mode of fastening that did not inflict unbearable torture. We declined to be bound by a committee whose unfairness, and even brutality, were soon manifest. Hulley and Cummins refused to retire and give place to another committee; the audience was made to believe that it was the form of a particular knot, and not the cruelty of its application, to which we objected; and we were compelled, by an unappeasable tumult, to return the money taken for tickets, and postpone further proceedings.

On the following evening, printed regulations were given to every person entering the hall, and read from the platform; in which we distinctly claimed the right of rejecting any person on a committee whom we should find acting with unfairness. This would be our right were we criminals on trial for felony. Before commencing, we invited all persons who were not satisfied with these regulations to retire from the hall, and receive the money they had paid for entrance.

Messrs. Hulley and Cummins, backed by a crowd of their friends, came again upon the platform, and, from their previous unfairness, were promptly rejected by us as a committee. They insisted upon tying us, and appealed to the audience to support them in their demand. They refused to leave the platform when requested, took possession of our cabinet, and in various ways excited violent manifestations in the audience.

We were then assured by a gentleman of Liverpool, that, unless we submitted to the demands of these men, there would be a furious riot. He promised that they should not be permitted to injure us, and we finally yielded to his assurances. But they had no sooner placed the cords upon our wrists, than they inflicted a degree of pain which could not be endured. We protested against this violence, but in vain; and, refusing to submit to it longer, had the cords cut from our wrists, and left the platform, which was instantly invaded by the mob. Our cabinet was broken in pieces; and Hulley and Cummins, the heroes of this assault of some hundreds of brave Englishmen upon four unarmed, unoffending, and unprotected foreigners, were borne from the hall upon the shoulders of their friends, apparently proud of their triumph.

Our cabinet destroyed, and our business interrupted, with heavy pecuniary damage, in Liverpool, we returned to London, had a new cabinet constructed, and on the following Monday repaired to Halifax, where we gave our usual public and private exhibitions, without interruption.

Our next engagement was at Huddersfield, Feb. 21. On our arrival, we were informed that Hulley and Cummins, the heroes of the Liverpool mob, had been telegraphed to, and were coming, with a strong deputation from that town, to break up our exhibition. The infuriated mob was the common talk of the town. We appealed to the police; and we are happy to say, that, in this instance, a sufficient force was promptly sent to the hall for our protection. The crowd that assembled gave many indications of being prepared for violence. When our representative had stated the regulations adopted, and that we proposed simply the presentation of certain facts, without any theory, and asked for the appointment of a committee, two gentlemen, instructed, it was said, by Hulley and Cummins, came upon the platform, and commenced to tie our wrists together behind us, which they did with needless severity. We bore the pain, however, until, carrying the ropes through the hole in the seat, they drew the backs of our hands down upon it with such violence as to threaten dislocation, placing their knees upon the seat, and in one instance upon the hands of one of us, to give them greater purchase. This torture, deliberately, and to all appearance maliciously inflicted, we, of course, could not bear; and, at our demand, the cords were instantly severed. We exposed our livid wrists, in which every strand of the cord was visibly imprinted, to the audience, who, to the credit of their humanity, cried out, "Shame!" But the mob, organized to break up our exhibition, had no such feeling, and made a simultaneous rush for the platform, where, however, an efficient police force saved our property from destruction, and us from a violence, which, under the stimulating addresses of the heroes of the Liverpool outrage, expended itself in hootings and howlings.

We had engagements for two nights at Hull; but, on our arrival,

we were informed by the gentleman who had engaged us, the chairman of the hall committee, and the police superintendent, that there were such indications of a violent mob, that we could not be permitted to give our exhibition; and we received from the gentleman chiefly interested the following note:—

“MUSIC HALL, JARRET STREET, HULL, 22d February, 1865.

“SIR, — As I believe there is reason to apprehend a disturbance at the hall this evening, if the *séance* of the Davenport brothers takes place, I have come to the conclusion that it would be advisable to postpone the *séance*. I am sorry to do this, particularly as yourself and the Messrs. Davenport have arrived in Hull, and are ready to fulfil your engagement; but I am driven to do so by the *organized attack* which I am given to understand is in preparation. I am also urged to do so by the proprietors of the hall, who are alarmed lest their property should be damaged by any disturbance.

I remain yours faithfully,

ROBERT BOWSER.”

“REV. DR. FERGUSON, ROYAL STATION HOTEL, HULL.”

Failing to find at Hull that protection in our legal rights which we had supposed was extended to every man on English ground, we went to meet our next engagement at Leeds, where the scenes of Liverpool and Huddersfield were re-enacted with increased violence. We were met by an organized mob, and were refused the protection of the police when it was demanded. When the ringleaders or agents of the mob, taking possession of the stage, had subjected us to the same violence that had been planned and practised upon us at Liverpool and Huddersfield, — the mob again destroying our property, smashing the cabinet, and breaking up or purloining our musical instruments, and we were protected from personal violence, amid the smashing of door-panels and the howling of an enraged populace, by the tardy arrival of a detachment of police and the brave and firm conduct of one of its members, — our agent, contrary to all justice, was compelled to order the return of the admission-money paid by those who had come for the very purpose of making the riot from which we suffered. On the same day, we had given a public *séance*, attended by the members of the press and some of the most respectable citizens of Leeds, in which the famous “tom-fool-knot” was used, and in which, so far as we were able to judge, the phenomena exhibited gave entire satisfaction.

It remains but to state two or three facts which may throw further light on these proceedings.

In Liverpool, as reported in “The Mercury,” Mr. Hulley, when accused of acting unfairly to, and being an enemy of, the Davenports, said, “I avow it; I am a bitter foe to the Davenports.”

After such an avowal, what right had he to act on a committee whose duty was strict impartiality?

We wish to be just to the police. At Huddersfield, though they could not give us order, we were protected from actual violence. At Leeds, such protection was withheld until too late to save our property.

At Liverpool, "The Mercury" says, —

"The appearance of inspectors Valentine and Southwell, with a force of thirty men, did not stop the process of demolition. The police, indeed, *did not attempt to interfere so long as only the property of the Davenports was threatened.*"

"The Leeds Mercury," reporting the violent proceedings against us at Huddersfield, says, —

"Mr. Walker, not considering that his hands could pull the rope tight enough, *used his knee to assist him*; and the brother he was operating on again protested. . . . Several persons had at that time gone to the cabinet, and Davenport showed his wrist to some of them. *It had a livid mark, fringed with red, about the breadth of a finger; and in the hollow of this mark there were the marks of the individual strands of the rope.*"

Yet some have been found to insist on inflicting this brutal torture upon us, with howling mobs to back them, as if we were malefactors or wild beasts. It may be doubted if such an amount of violence, wrong, and outrage has been inflicted on any unoffending man in England since Clarkson was mobbed by the slave-traders of Liverpool, and Priestley by the mad bigots of Birmingham.

And for what reason? What evil have we done? Of what wrong can any man accuse us? How have we offended the public or any individual? If there were any thing immoral or unlawful in our exhibition, we could understand the feeling which has prompted so much lawless violence, which has been so largely excused by the press, and tolerated by the police authorities. We are called humbugs; but, if every humbug in England is to be mobbed, it may be well for both the government and the people to consider the possible consequences. But we solemnly and earnestly deny that we have ever deceived any man in this matter, or made any false representation; and we can appeal to many thousands of intelligent persons, on both sides of the Atlantic, who will testify to the reality of these manifestations. It was said to us at Liverpool, "Admit that you practise deception, and we have nothing to say against you." How could we admit what is not true? For eleven years we have constantly asserted that the physical facts exhibited in our presence are not produced actively or consciously by ourselves, nor by confederates, nor by any trick or deception whatever; and we have submitted to hundreds of tests, and are ready to submit to hundreds more, to satisfy any reasonable mind of the truth of this declaration.

It is utterly false that we have refused to be tied with a particular knot. We have simply and only refused to be tortured. We have been covered all over with the most complicated fastenings that could be devised; we have been held hand and foot by persons above all suspicion of fraud, and tested in every conceivable way, without affecting the manifestations which occur in our presence. In eleven years, we have never been fastened so that the "force" attending us, whatever it may be called or considered, has not released us. We do not believe we can be, unless placed in such pain as to destroy the conditions under which this "force" is able to act. With or without fastenings, this power attends us; single or together, awake or asleep, bound or held; and in whatever way our passivity is procured, the manifestations alike in kind, if not in degree, attend us. There is no fraud, no trick.

Were we mere jugglers, we should meet with no violence, or we should find protection. Could we declare that these things done in our presence were deceptions of the senses, we should, no doubt, reap a plentiful harvest of money and applause. As tricks, they would transcend, according to the testimony of experienced observers, any ever exhibited in Occident or Orient. The wonders of the cabinet, or, still more, of the dark *séance*, surpass all pretensions of conjurers. We could safely defy the world to equal them, and be honored for our dexterity. But we are not jugglers, and truthfully declare that we are not; and we are mobbed from town to town, our property destroyed, and our lives imperilled.

What is the possible motive for these outrages, which some of the enlightened organs of public opinion have incited and excused? Breaking no law, we claim the protection of the law, which, we repeat, even were we criminals, would save us from illegal outrage. If we, asserting physical facts interesting to every man of science, and doing our best to demonstrate their verity, and satisfy a laudable curiosity respecting them, are to be treated as we have been this past fortnight in four large English towns, who can be safe from similar outrages? We have ventured to appeal to her Majesty's Secretary for the Home Department; and we appeal also to every member of the British Parliament, as we do to the whole British people, to give our case a proper investigation.

If, in spite of our solemn declarations of entire good faith, and all our efforts to demonstrate the reality of the phenomena which attend us, we are disbelieved, every man in England has the right to absent himself from our exhibitions. We do not ask the attendance of any person who is not ready to give a fair and candid examination to the tests to which we submit and the facts presented. There is no reason for excitement, and no excuse for violence. There is as much call for riot against electricity, or a mob to put down oxygen. We have not even an opinion to support or a creed to promulgate; only certain curious, or, it may be, important facts to exhibit.

Shall we be allowed to do this? This is the question now to be decided. The riots at Liverpool, Huddersfield, and Leeds, have excited and alarmed all England. In scores of places where we have engagements, involving many thousands of pounds, our agents, or those interested, have become frightened, and their and our interests are placed in jeopardy. Shall they be sacrificed? It is for the people, the press, and the government of England to determine.

It is our intention to go on in the work in which we are, in perfect sincerity, engaged. We are ready to give, in every town in the United Kingdom, the proofs that we have given in London of the reality of the phenomena we exhibit, and with which the tying of ropes, on which so much stress is laid, has so little to do, that they might by entirely dispensed with, substituting many other tests of an equally or more satisfactory character. We are ready, in good faith, to fulfil every engagement; but we demand, as we think we have a right to demand, the protection of the laws under which we have voluntarily placed ourselves, and a little more of boasted "English fair play," of which we have heard so much, and, in a few cases, experienced so little.

IRA ERASTUS DAVENPORT.

WM. HENRY DAVENPORT.

(Known as the brothers Davenport.)

LONDON, Feb. 27, 1865.

*Ex-parte* accounts of the outrages were published in the English journals, and the pretended discomfiture of the brothers was telegraphed in the English summary from Halifax to the Associated Press of America, and thus passed into the columns of nearly all the daily papers of the country. A *lie*, opposed to truth and justice, was thus widely circulated, few of those papers ever making even poor amends by noticing the contradiction of the brothers, or publishing the *facts* which subsequently appeared in "The Liverpool Daily Post." The wonderfully clear-sighted public journalists of London prophesied that the Davenports were "on their last legs," and would never, at least, re-appear in that city. Liverpool, Huddersfield, Leeds, and Cheltenham had all done mob-duty in true English style, and these "impostors" must forever vanish.

But the Davenports were suddenly discovered, with in-

domitable *sang froid*, exhibiting again at the Hanover-Square Rooms to large and remunerative audiences, being again repeatedly submitted to novel tests in the presence of many of the most distinguished gentlemen of the kingdom. After the publication of their clear and manly address, a re-action in their favor among the more intelligent classes began to be observed. Their rooms were thronged until the farewell public *séance*, which occurred on the 8th of April. They subsequently gave a private *séance*, at the house of the editor of "The London Standard," the manifestations coming off with the usual *éclat*. The speech of Dr. Ferguson, concluding the *séances* in London, is so very interesting, that we make from it the following extract:—

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—We conclude our oft-repeated *séances* in the Queen's Concert Rooms to-day. For over six months we have been engaged in the presentation of the remarkable phenomena you are present to witness, to the public of this realm; and for more than half this time in these rooms, and in the private residences of the nobility and gentry of the metropolis. Our exhibition has been witnessed by the representatives of all classes and conditions of society; and I feel that we may, in truth, say, that no facts have ever, in the same length of time, commanded a greater amount of attention, or called forth more variety of estimate. We have met gentility and rowdyism, learning and ignorance, crudeness and refined practical skill; the most respectful and inquiring investigations, and the most boorish attempts at ridicule, and sometimes violent efforts for destruction. Our integrity as exhibitors of facts is to-day untarnished, and the facts themselves undeniable and undenied by all who have given to them a faithful and impartial investigation. They have been reported in almost every journal of the United Kingdom. They have been imitated, with more or less cleverness, by all the conjurers and amateur rope-tiers of this realm. They have been denied, denounced, doubted, and acknowledged in turn, in almost every club, coterie, and drawing-room. They have been subjected to the greatest variety of tests that the skill and ingenuity of this great people could devise. And the man lives not who can say he has ever proved them unreal, or detected in us, or in what we exhibit, the slightest evidence of fraud or imposition upon popular credulity. Many objections have been urged against them; and all, so far as they have come before the public, have been met and

fairly answered. Hence we hesitate not to say, that no truth has been more fairly and honestly demonstrated than this: that a power beyond and above the active agency of man in fleshly form can and does, under appropriate conditions, make itself manifest; and it has done so, beyond all rational denial or doubt, in the presence of the brothers Davenport, before all classes of the British public. [Hear, hear.] In the consciousness of this truth, we have our reward to-day for all that has fallen to our lot to do, to meet, or to bear, in the relation that I sustain to these gentlemen and to you. We have met the ridicule of "sham cleverness," the abuse and slander of inconsiderate literateurs, the doubt and suspicion awakened by the pretensions of conjurers; the serious and inquiring questioning of minds anxious only for truth; the fear of friends, and the abuse of the enemies of the renewed hope of humanity in the knowledge of its spiritual destiny,—and, before heaven and earth, I fearlessly affirm, that I have not deceived you, nor any, but have, without hope of earthly reward, presented an honest exhibition of truth that no estimate of time can destroy. Therefore I have no complaints to make,—none whatever. Strangers to you, with strange experiences, we have appeared unheralded in your midst, asking nothing but what one man may ever legitimately ask of another, irrespective of national, social, or any conventional distinctions. My work is now done; and I leave to time, and the Eternal Power that transmits to man his duty and destiny, the result of that work.

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## CHAPTER XXVIII.

A RETIRED East-India merchant, named Guppy, a gentleman of great wealth and high social position, who had become deeply interested in the phenomena, proposed to accompany the troupe to France, and to assume the entire pecuniary responsibility of bringing them before the French public. He accordingly leased the *Petit Château, Gennevillers*, within five miles of Paris, where they resided for about four months, while vainly endeavoring to obtain a *government permit* to give *séances* to the literary and scientific men of Paris. In a land where political freedom is



unknown, where no gatherings, religious or political, are allowed without a permit from the police, sanctioned by Catholic priests, perhaps they ought to have expected no better success. The pretence for withholding this permission, as given by the prefect of police, was from fear that their *séances* might excite collision between the Catholics and Protestants. The subtle instinct of the Catholic ecclesiastics, who instigated this delay, at once perceived, that, in the phenomena attending these brothers, there was something of a very different character and origin than the jugglery of Houdin, Robin, and other conjurers, to whom government freely gives permission to play their tricks, and present counterfeits of genuine spirit-manifestations.

The treatment of the Davenports by the police, up to the time of their reception by the Emperor, clearly evinced a determination to break down their reputation before the world, and drive them from France as charlatans.

During this delay, they were visited by a number of the most influential men of the empire, to whom private *séances* were given with perfect success. The interest thus awakened secured for them, assisted by a gentleman influentially connected with the highest personage in France, the desired "permit." The magnificent hall owned by Mr. Herz, the largest in Paris, and capable of comfortably holding one thousand persons, was at once taken, and a public *séance* advertised. The tickets sold rapidly, being graded from five francs, up through the reserved seats, to the very high price of twenty-five francs. It was noticed that about one hundred of the lower-priced tickets, admitting holders to the rear of the hall, were taken by one party; and the object of so unusual a proceeding was privately commented on by the brothers, as probably indicating a combined demonstration by opponents.

Long before the appointed hour arrived, the hall was crowded almost to suffocation, and many hundred persons

were disappointed in not being able to gain admission. The committee selected consisted of M. de Péne, one of the first writers of France, and editor of the "Gazette des Étrangers," and another well-known and respected gentleman, a cousin of the Emperor. On stepping upon the stage, these gentlemen were warmly applauded by the audience, and immediately commenced a careful and thorough examination of all the instruments and cabinet, expressing themselves perfectly satisfied that there were no secret springs or deception of any character. The brothers then entered the cabinet, and were bound by the committee in a very skilful and workmanlike manner, who also reported to the audience that the Davenport's were entirely secure, and that it would be impossible for them to move. This report received hearty rounds of applause; and, as the committee turned to close the doors of the cabinet, the trumpet bounded from the floor, over their heads, and fell upon the stage. The astonishment of the committee and audience may be imagined upon this instantaneous proof of foreign agency. The doors being closed, hands flashed before the window, the instruments were played upon, — and again the committee sprang to the box, only to find the mediums bound as they had left them.

At this instant, a man rose in the rear of the hall, and demanded permission to come forward and examine that cabinet himself. He was informed that it was contrary to the rules of the exhibition for any one to come upon the stage after the committee had been selected. The matter was in their hands, in behalf of the audience, and they were competent to discharge their duty. This announcement was received with applause by the majority of the audience; but it was soon evident, from the vociferous noises and loud demands that he be permitted to go upon the stage from parties in the rear of the hall, that there was an organized conspiracy to interrupt the *séance*. Great confusion ensued;

and several American gentlemen, visitors in Paris, who sat near the stage, said to the brothers, that, if it was their wish not to comply with this demand, they would protect them in resisting it, at the hazard of their lives. The brothers consulted; and as such disturbance might be considered sufficient pretext by the police for closing the *séance* altogether, as they have power to do, it was decided to allow this man to come upon the stage. The manifestations were resumed, the doors of the cabinet were opened, and the brothers found secure, when suddenly this man rushed to the cabinet, and placing his back against one side, and his feet against the upright post in the centre, he wrenched away by main force the cross-bar into which the seats are fastened; the boys, thus bound, falling forward with the seats. Triumphantly holding up this broken stick to the audience, he declared that he had discovered secret springs. An immense uproar then ensued, many of the audience insisting that he be taken into custody by the police.

M. le Commissionnaire de Police, Bellinger, being present, mounted the stage, and told the audience that they must leave the hall. The audience insisted that the Davenports be allowed to proceed. The brothers proposed to have the broken seats removed, and chairs placed in the cabinet; but the commissioner peremptorily ordered the *gens-d'armes* to clear the hall, and it was done.

The agent of the brothers *voluntarily* returned the money which had been received, and also disbursed some thirty pounds beside, several persons demanding their money two or three times over, some of whom were detected. Many, among whom was the Marquis of Hertford and party, disgusted with the violence offered to the brothers, refused the fee of twenty-five francs each which they had paid, expressing their entire satisfaction with what they had witnessed of the manifestations.

So ended the first public *séance* in Paris, to the great disgust of an audience who manifested their indignation at being disappointed in witnessing the phenomena, through the ruffianism of a clique, who came with the avowed purpose of breaking up the meeting, as afterward stated to the Davenports by no less a personage than the Prefect of Police himself.

Having good reason to believe that this affair originated with a certain well-known conjurer named Robin, over whose signature also appeared in "The Moniteur du Soir" a tissue of falsified statements, put together with the evident purpose of doing harm to the brothers, they addressed a letter to the editor of that journal, containing a challenge to Robin, from which the following is an extract:—

This is not the first time that we have been subjected to the attacks of people of that profession, always on the lookout for the slightest favorable opportunity of occupying the public with their own persons, and in making the reputation of others subservient to their own interests. Many a time, within the last twelve years, have we come into collision with jugglers. The case has no novelty in it for us, and we expect to see it renewed. We have not come from one end of the world to the other, abandoning our native country, to grant any importance or attention, merely upon the strength of having arrived in France, to the calumnies of all the sham-tricksters and prestidigitateurs who may cross our path.

We are desirous to give to men of science, and all persons animated by a serious and loyal spirit of research and investigation, an opportunity of examining phenomena that have already been produced in presence of thousands of witnesses, and that have been vouched for by some of the most renowned *savans* of England and America. The mere perusal of the letter in question can but have the effect of making all persons of common sense and equity shrug their shoulders. In fact, M. Robin summons us, without any other preamble, to deliver ourselves up to his abode, without any remuneration whatever, and to allow him to treat us according to his own discretion, and he generously promises to consecrate the product of the receipts to the hospitals. It is always easy to be prodigal with other people's money. We take no care to oppose the munificence of M. Robin, or, indeed, *his desire* to put it into effect at our expense. We will, however, consent, for once only, to meet him on the following conditions, which seem to us perfectly acceptable, in view of their incontrovertible honesty:—

1. M. Robin shall deposit a sum of ten thousand francs ; and we, on our side, will deposit the same amount.

2. A committee of twenty notable persons shall be named, and we will appear in their presence.

3. M. Robin is to attend the *séance*.

4. This committee shall witness the facts that have at various times been shown to the public, under the same conditions in which they generally occur.

5. M. Robin will be bound thereupon to imitate us exactly, using the same ropes, the same cabinet, and the same instruments which have been used with us, but nothing more.

6. Should M. Robin not obtain the same results as ourselves, in the same manner, and within the same space of time, he shall forfeit his deposit of ten thousand francs.

7. In the event of his succeeding to produce the same results on the above-named conditions, he shall become the possessor of the ten thousand francs deposited by us.

Of course, as in all cases where the brothers have stooped to notice these charlatans, by offering fair opportunities of testing their pretensions, this challenge was refused by Robin, on the ground that he had not had twelve years practice to enable him to compete with the Davenports, although he had been bamboozling a too credulous public, for the six months last past, into the belief that he was "showing them exactly the same thing."

"Spiritualism is dead and buried in Paris," wrote the Parisian correspondent of "The London Morning Advertiser," after falsifying the facts, and dilating upon the disturbance which took place at the first public appearance of the brothers, above described ; and the English and American papers eagerly seized upon the false statements of prejudiced correspondents, and rung their changes again upon the old cries, "humbug," "exposed," "found out at last," so often used by them to kill out this innovation upon materialism and the doctrine of the Sadducees.

But the brothers were undisturbed by all this "baying at the moon," not only remaining in Paris, giving the lie to the insolent statements of the press that they are found out

by a broken stick, but continuing their *séances*, the audiences limited by the police to sixty persons, for fear of difficulty, the price of admission being raised from twenty-five to thirty francs.

On Saturday afternoon, Oct. 28, a notice from his Majesty, Emperor Napoleon, was very unexpectedly received by the Davenports, requesting them to appear at the palace of St. Cloud that evening, at eight o'clock. As it was then after five, and as such an interview had been entirely unsought by them, the brothers were not wholly prepared to appear on so short a notice. They immediately despatched a message to St. Cloud, to the effect that it would be impossible for them to appear at that time, as the necessary arrangements (packing, transporting, and erecting the cabinet) would take a much longer time. His majesty would listen to no excuse, but insisted on seeing them that evening, stating that a little unavoidable delay on their part was excusable under the circumstances.

They were afterward informed that it was not until Saturday noon that the Emperor was aware of their presence in Paris, as he had been deceived by the falsehoods of the press, which affirmed that they had gone to Germany. As he saw them advertised to appear on Monday evening at la Salle Herz, to continue all the week, he thought Saturday evening would be the only opportunity of seeing them without interfering with their public engagements.

They arrived at St. Cloud about nine o'clock, and found some thirty distinguished persons of the court assembled, and among them the Emperor and Empress, also the young Prince Imperial, a fine, active little fellow, who was anxious to have them *teach him the trick*, as he called it.

During the process of erecting the cabinet, which occupied about three-quarters of an hour, his Majesty was present, and looked on with the greatest interest, closely scrutinizing every part as it was properly adjusted. Every

thing being in readiness, the company being seated, two persons came forward, and, in a very scientific and skilful manner, commenced binding the brothers, his Majesty standing near, and examining every cord and knot placed upon them. The Empress, upon one occasion, thinking the ropes upon their wrists were too tightly drawn, ordered them to be slackened, and would only allow the tying to proceed after the most positive assurance on their part that the cords caused them no inconvenience. After the tying process was completed, and while the instruments were being placed in the cabinet by one of the gentlemen, the trumpet, which had just been put in upon the floor, and while the doors of the cabinet were open, suddenly sprang into the air, and fell near the emperor. This was repeated several times, with variations, in the strong glare of gas-light; and other manifestations, commonly occurring with them, were given with more than ordinary force.

During the evening, one of the gentlemen entered the cabinet, and received several *striking* manifestations; and, in making his report of what he had experienced, he assured their majesties, and all present, that what had occurred while he was seated in the cabinet was produced by some foreign power; that the brothers did not move a single muscle, and that he sat as still as possible.

Many tests, not commonly given, were obtained during the evening. By request of the emperor, a watch was taken from his hand, and carried to different persons in the room. The removal of the coat while the knots were sealed, and the hands securely fastened, and the light being introduced while the coat was in the air, and plainly visible, drew an exclamation of wonder and surprise from the company. We think we are justified in asserting that there was not one individual present, who, after witnessing the wonders of that *séance*, had the least doubt of the reality of the phenomena.

At the conclusion of the *séance*, the brothers were detained for half an hour by the emperor and empress, answering questions in regard to the phenomena and their causes, the emperor saying he was not surprised at the excitement which such an extraordinary exhibition created in a large assembly. It was, he thought, imprudent to attempt to show such phenomena to many persons at one time, who could not test for themselves their reality. After many expressions of their entire satisfaction, the imperial party withdrew at half-past one in the morning, and the Davenports sat down to a sumptuous supper which had been provided for them at the palace.

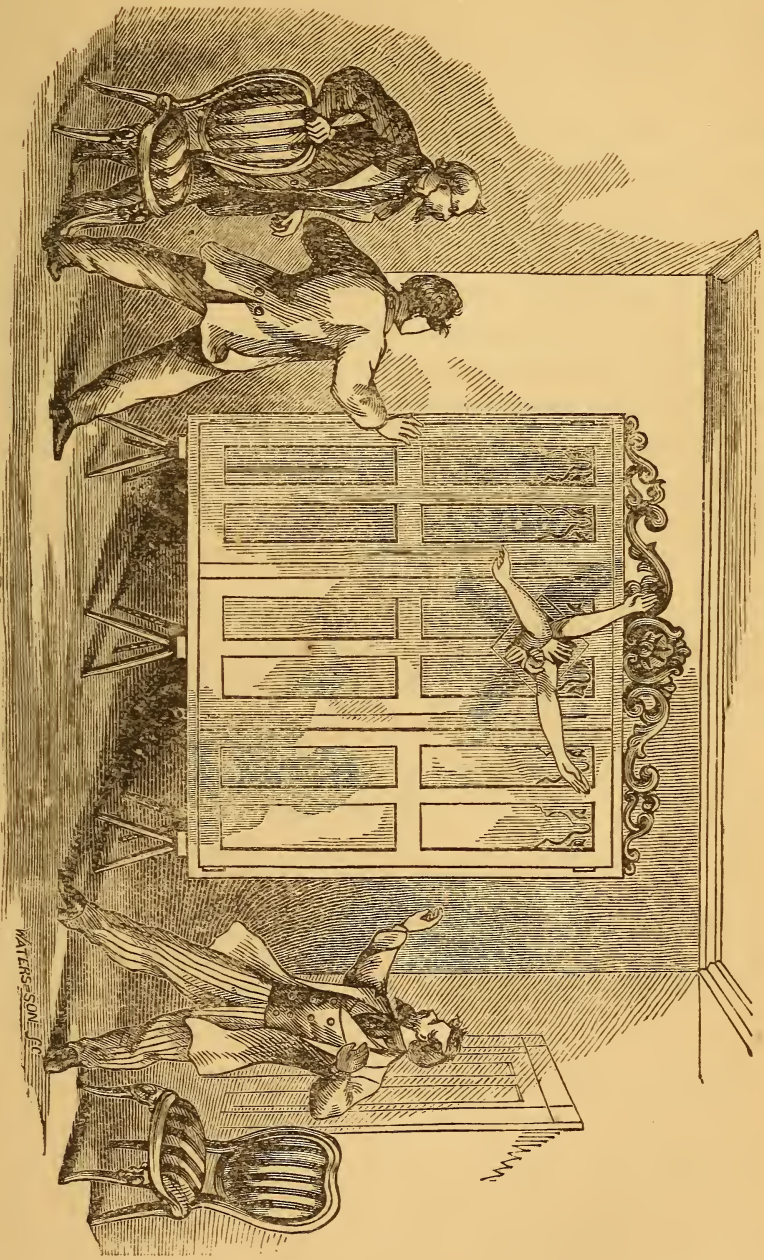
On the following day, the emperor marked his further appreciation of the exhibition by sending to the Davenport party an unusually munificent gift for their services.

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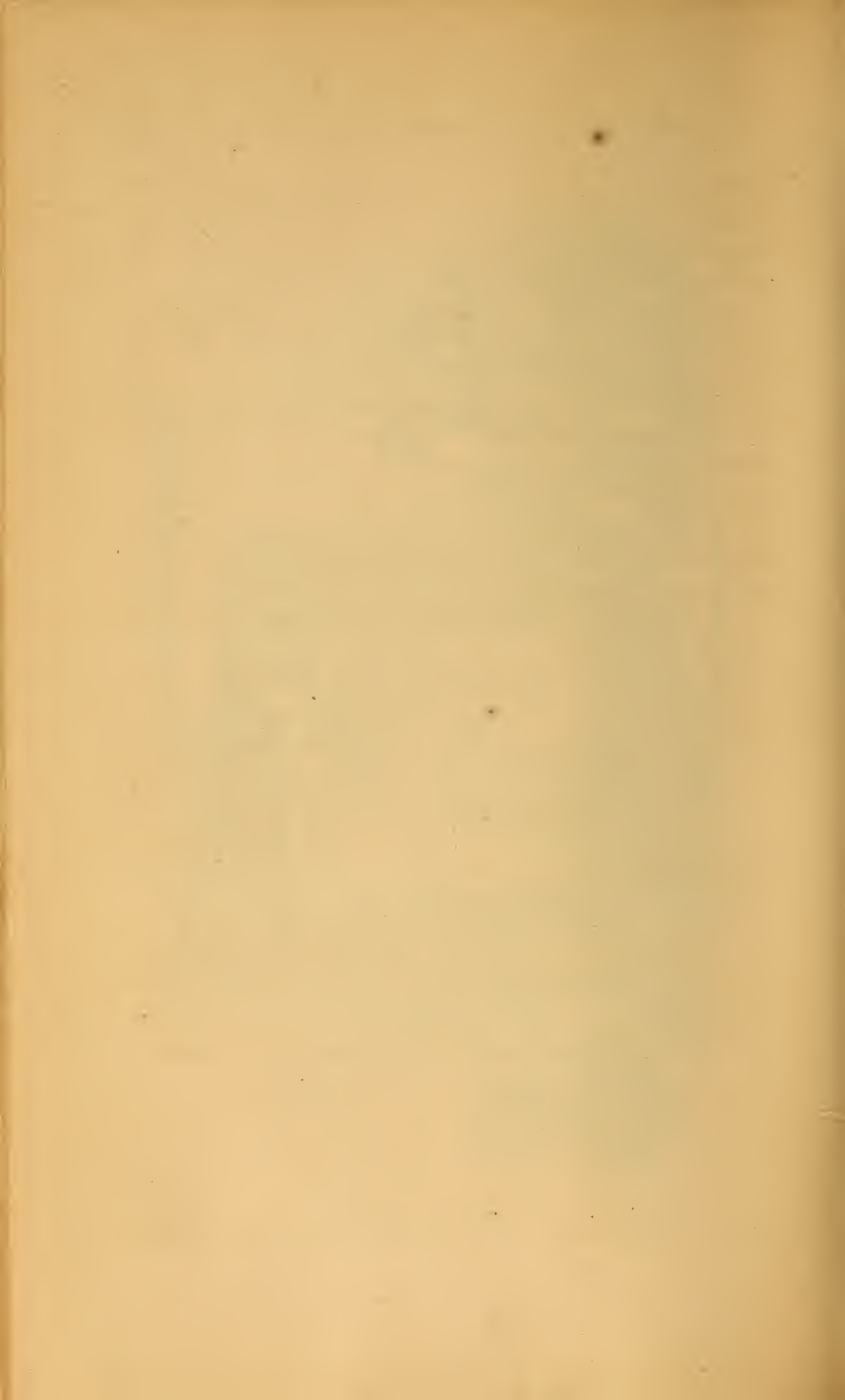
## CHAPTER XXIX.

IN December, the brothers returned to London. Either the prestige of their visit to St. Cloud, or the sober second thought of a people who had temporarily allowed themselves to become duped by tricksters, bullied by mobs, and temporarily ridiculed out of their native love of justice and fair play by conceited and popularity-hunting journalists, had prepared for them a most cordial reception. On their re-appearance at the Hanover-square Rooms, they were greeted by a large, respectable, and harmonious audience, the manifestations increasing in power and variety during their five *séances*, three arms appearing at intervals, and a large number of hands being shown. At one time, while the flour test was on, a gentleman in black kid gloves mounted the platform, and either seized, or was seized by, one of the





WATERS - SCULPTOR



hands, being held fast for several minutes, appearing in an agony of pain from the grip. When he was released, some one called out, "Is there any flour on your gloves?" He looked, but not a particle of dust could be seen.

In January, 1866, accompanied by Mr. Robert Cooper, then proprietor of "The London Spiritual Times," and a zealous spiritualist, the Davenports made a tour through Ireland and Scotland, successively visiting Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick, Waterford, and many other places in Ireland; thence to Edinburgh, Glasgow, and some of the smaller towns of Scotland. Everywhere the phenomena excited intense interest, the audiences always increasing as the *séances* proceeded, being composed, as a general fact, of the most respectable classes. The only display of rowdiness during this tour was made by a party of English officers at Waterford.

The press of Ireland and Scotland treated the mediums and the phenomena with remarkable fairness. Their opinions were much more sensible, and far more consistent with the wonderful nature of the facts exhibited through the Davenports, than those of the English journals.

"The Freeman's Journal," after describing the phenomena witnessed, sums up thus:—

It would be, perhaps, wearisome to go further into detail. Suffice it to say, that *we witnessed last night the strangest and most unaccountable performance that could be thought of, next to the sacred miracles.*

"The Irish Times" has the following sensible remarks:—

*That they are possessed with mysterious power, bordering almost on the supernatural, would appear to be undoubted.* The phenomena which they present astound the audience, and *defy all efforts at discovery.* It is better to abstain from the expression of any decided opinion as to the agency employed in the manifestations, and simply relate what one has witnessed. Many opinions respecting them have been formed, and some of an adverse character, urged

with a degree of acerbity by the English press. Statements, too, have been made, that their agency has been discovered, and that the manifestations produced were merely the efforts of successful conjurers. In that opinion *few impartial persons can concur*, and certainly *none who were present at the séance last evening*.

“Saunders’s News Letter and Daily Advertiser” says of the first *séance*, —

For three hours, we were in an atmosphere so pervaded with mystery and wonder, that, long ere the performance was over, *we had given up all hope of finding the key to any thing we saw*.

“The Daily Express,” equally bewildered, goes on to say, —

Much has been said and published at the surprising feats performed by these young men; and however prepared those present might have been to witness all that the most extravagant fancy could imagine, and notwithstanding the skepticism of many was openly expressed, the proceedings last evening eclipsed the anticipations of the most sanguine, *staggered the prejudices of those the last to admit of supernatural agency*, and evoked from all the most unequivocal and decided marks of approbation. To account for them by ordinary laws of nature seems impossible; that a supernatural agency should be invoked, common sense forbade believing; and the audience, while acknowledging the unaccountable nature of the means employed, were content to express their astonishment, and give the brothers every credit for candor and extraordinary ability.

“The Dublin Advertising Gazette” says, —

Popular delusions have been at all times considered remarkable; and one of the most singular of that class is the perfect faith with which the gross misrepresentation of the brothers Davenport have been received. The English press stated that these gentlemen were nothing but “indifferent conjurers,” and that their *séances* were totally devoid of the smallest element of wonder. Such statements we have no hesitation in branding as being without the smallest foundation of truth.

The Glasgow “North British Mail” says, —

The fact that the brothers tacitly affirm the presence of unseen powers, and have really not yet been satisfactorily “exposed,”

adds a vague sentiment of *diablerie* to the feelings with which the onlooker regards the said phenomena, that considerably heightens the charm of the *séance*. The Messrs. Davenport, any unprejudiced person who has once seen them will say, have been unjustly treated, and, to some extent, maligned. Let the wonders with which they amuse an audience be produced how they may, the entertainment is, so far as we have seen or heard, neither to be approached nor imitated. Every part of the *séance*, we may add, is conducted with quiet taste and decorum, on which no rowdyism, it is to be hoped, will, during their stay in this city, at all obtrude.

It was hoped, by some, that the philosophical acuteness of Scotchmen at those famous seats of learning, Edinburgh and Glasgow, might have thrown some light upon the mysterious agency involved: but the simple fact is, that the most learned can no more explain the matter upon any natural hypothesis than the most ignorant; and, so far as any philosophical explanation is concerned, the entire learned world are in just the same labyrinth of mystery as they were when the manifestations were first witnessed.

On the night of Easter Monday, the brothers Davenport returned again for a brief season to their "old stamping-ground," the Hanover-square Rooms, London, previous to their Continental tour.

The public interest now manifested in London would have warranted a permanent stay in that city; but Mr. Robert Cooper, whose experience with the brothers had not only convinced him "that the Davenports are instruments in the hands of the spirit-world for giving evidences to humanity of a spiritual existence, the like of which has never before been seen in the world's history," but also that the hard-headed materialism of the age, everywhere existing, should be assailed in its strongholds as rapidly as possible, proposed immediately to visit Germany.

Notwithstanding the public attention was greatly absorbed by preparations then being made for the recent war, the *séances* were tolerably successful, and a good effect was

produced. Great courtesy was shown on all hands; and the king's private concert-room at Berlin was granted for their use. The king himself, with various members of the aristocracy of Germany, witnessed their manifestations repeatedly. Some seventeen of the newspapers favorably noticed them, and they were treated with marked respect by all with whom they came in contact. Still, the Germans are avowedly materialistic. They next visited Hamburg, and then went to Belgium, where they exhibited in all the principal towns, producing an indelible impression.

At Brussels, which contains, as "John King" says, "the concentrated superstition of the ages," the brothers remained nearly a month; the *séances* given both to the press and public going off with great *éclat*. At one, the celebrated Victor Hugo occupied the seat of honor, and, at the termination of the *séance*, expressed himself surprised and satisfied with the manifestations; adding, that they exceeded any thing that he could have deemed possible.

In addition to the public *séances* in this city, private ones were given, — one to the spiritualists, who considered themselves "nothing, unless critical," and carried their tests to a ridiculous extent; so much so, that they came and tendered an apology for their conduct the next day.

At a *séance* before the first literary society of the town, blue paint was placed on the instruments, unknown to the mediums; but, though the instruments were all played on, no trace of the paint was found on the hands of the brothers.

At Antwerp, at the conclusion of the cabinet *séance*, a gentleman exhibited his hand, covered with some black composition of a greasy nature. He said he had caught hold of the hands that appeared at the cabinet window, with his hands thus blackened, fully expecting, when the Davenports came from the cabinet, to find their hands blackened; but, to his great surprise, such was not the case.

At Liége, a large manufacturing town in Belgium, they

remained five nights, exciting the astonishment of several hundred persons. The Belgium press acted very liberally and honorably toward the subject; and, through its instrumentality, the facts were made known to thousands. In Louvain, the brothers were particularly successful; the hall overflowing, the audience being composed of great numbers of students of the university.

Two highly successful exhibitions were given in Namur, a town swarming with Roman-Catholic priests. Visiting Charleroy, and a few other towns in that country, they next proceeded to Holland.

On Sept. 17, 1866, their first *séance* was given to the members of the press and about fifty of the most prominent and influential gentlemen of Amsterdam, preparatory to their opening a regular series of public *séances*. The press, as usual, when not influenced by popular tumult or the pressure of a *mob*, made voluminous and interesting reports, describing minutely and truthfully all the different manifestations they had seen, and commenting with great severity upon the violent and unreasonable opposition which they encountered in many towns of England and France.

The result was, that two days after, when the brothers gave their first *séance*, they were warmly received by a very large and respectable audience. During their stay of three weeks, they gave about twenty public and private *séances* in Amsterdam, granting investigators every opportunity, in private, to examine and test the reality of the phenomena; in every instance giving complete satisfaction. During their tour through Holland, they visited nearly all the towns and cities of any note, giving, in all, ninety public and private *séances*; in many instances, the largest theatres and halls being so crowded, that many persons were unable to gain admittance.

Returning to Brussels, they gave several entertainments in the most commodious hall in the city; after which, being

directed so to do by the spirits, they started on their journey to Russia, stopping by request at several towns on the route, and giving public *séances* to immense audiences; always being warmly applauded at the conclusion of the manifestations. From the decided opinions of some persons, who said they could not succeed in Russia, they hesitated at first to visit that country; but the result, contrary to their expectations, proved a great success.

After a long and tedious journey of ninety hours, they arrived in St. Petersburg on the 27th of December, and immediately commenced preparations for giving a series of *séances*, both public and private. The fame of the brothers having preceded them, it required but a verbal announcement of their arrival to awaken an immense interest among all classes to witness the wonders that occur in their presence. Invitations were immediately issued to all the members of the press, and a *séance* given to them, with the most satisfactory results. Every journal, without an exception, bore testimony in the most vigorous and emphatic language to the extraordinary character of the phenomena. The following day, the brothers received as many as fifty visitors of the nobility, all anxious to make engagements for private *séances*.

Their first public *séance* was given on the 7th of January to an immense audience of the nobility of St. Petersburg; the very high charges of twelve and sixteen francs admission tending to exclude all below a certain rank. In consequence of all the seats being engaged in advance during the day, the hall was crowded in every part long before eight o'clock, the hour of commencing. After a searching and careful examination of the cabinet, ropes, and musical instruments, by the committee (one of them a *Russian admiral*), the brothers appeared on the platform, and were received with great applause by the audience. For two hours, the manifestations continued with great power; the



committee resorting to every means which their ingenuity and that of the audience could suggest *to fathom the mystery*, until they were perfectly satisfied, as they afterwards stated to the audience, "of the integrity of the entertainment, and honesty of the brothers." The receipts upon this occasion amounted to the very large sum of nine hundred pounds, or forty-five hundred dollars.

The next *séance* was given at the residence of the French ambassador, M. Talleyrand (nephew of the celebrated minister of Napoleon of that name), to a party of his friends, numbering in all about fifty persons of the nobility, including many of the officers of the imperial court. Gen. Cassius M. Clay, our American ambassador, and the Count Scroffenhoff, brother-in-law to the emperor, acted as the committee; and both, after a careful investigation of two hours, during which time they received the most conclusive and satisfactory tests, expressed themselves perfectly satisfied as to the inexplicability of the manifestations.

On the evening of the 9th, they gave a *séance* in the Winter Palace to the emperor and imperial family, by especial request of his Majesty. There were present about thirty persons, besides the emperor, empress, the crown prince, and the Princess Dagmar. The manifestations were very powerful, and gave the most complete satisfaction to all present. By request of his Majesty, several persons were admitted into the cabinet with the brothers, one of them being the crown prince: by his request, he was tied and untied while in the cabinet, in contact with the brothers, also receiving many manifestations which convinced him of the fact that there was some power independent of the brothers. The manifestations continued for two hours and a half; and, at the conclusion, the emperor and empress expressed their satisfaction with the *séance*, thanking the brothers very cordially, and asking many questions.

The unqualified approval of the czar was their best pass-

port to the patronage of the nobility and aristocracy of St. Petersburg, before whom alone the Davenports exhibited. Among some of the noble families to whom private *séances* were given were the Prince Constantine, Count Koncheleff, Prince Paskawick, the French ambassador, the American ambassador, and many others, — thirty-eight in all.

After their great success at St. Petersburg, the brothers visited Moscow and some of the smaller towns in Russia; passing thence to Warsaw, Vilna, Rega, the chief cities of Poland, everywhere exciting the greatest wonder. Indeed, they were threatened with a loss of their permit, on the ground that they were “turning peoples’ heads with the idea of supernaturalism.” A conjurer having announced that he would do all that they did, the Davenports wrote a challenge to him for ten thousand roubles (about \$850). The chief of police, however, who ranks as a general, and whose position is similar to that of the lord lieutenant in Ireland, would not allow them to put out the challenge, lest it should confirm the general belief in the supernatural character of the manifestations.

Three months were spent in Russia, resulting not only in making many converts to the supramundane theory of the manifestations, but also in a rich harvest, in a pecuniary sense, for the brothers; which was most richly deserved.

Returning to Prussia, some weeks were spent in giving *séances* at Königsberg, Danzig, Stettin, &c. Crossing the Baltic Sea, they visited Copenhagen, in Denmark, and many of the principal places in Norway and Sweden. Returning again to Berlin, Prussia, they gave several public and private entertainments; thence to Dresden and Leipsic, in Saxony, where they were visited by the king and crown prince. Spending a few weeks of the summer in visiting the Saxon Swiss, amid the magnificent scenery of the Harz Mountains, they passed on to Prague, in the basin of Bohemia; thence to Austria, exhibiting in Vienna, where they received great attention from the nobility.

Returning to Switzerland by way of Munich, in Bavaria, they gave *séances* in all the most important places with good success; and then crossed into France, exhibiting at Marseilles, Nismes, Nice, and several other towns. At Nice, they were frequently visited by King Louis of Bavaria (the husband of the widely-noted Lola Montez), then quite an old man, and since deceased.

The limits of this volume will not admit, even were it necessary, a detailed account of the reception met with by the brothers in these various cities and towns. No disposition was anywhere manifested to oppose by violence the presentation of these wonderful phenomena. On the contrary, great interest was manifested; and with occasional variations, incidental to changing conditions, the manifestations in public and private *séances* were of the same character which has been so often fully described.

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### CHAPTER XXX.

AFTER a most successful tour of nearly three years through Continental Europe, the Davenport brothers again returned to London once more, before their departure for America, to challenge public investigation and criticism. Upon their re-appearance at the Hanover-square Rooms on the 11th of April, 1868, they were received in the most flattering manner by a crowded and enthusiastic audience.

Mr. Benjamin Coleman, a gentleman probably more thoroughly informed of the progress of spiritualism in Europe than any other individual, and whose record of "Passing Events," published in "The London Spiritual Magazine," is a most valuable compend of the phenomenal aspects of the movement, published a letter in the May

issue of that magazine, in which he thus speaks of the brothers and the *séance* mentioned above: —

I was present at this *séance*; and it will be sufficient to say that the Davenports' mediumistic powers are not diminished, but, if possible, they are increased; especially in the cabinet exhibition, where hands, life-like in form and texture, were frequently seen before the doors were closed, and where, from the aperture, there were protruded at one time two long, naked, femininely-formed arms, and also a group of not less than five hands of various sizes at the same instant.

It is nearly four years since the Davenports first arrived in London, accompanied by the Rev. J. B. Ferguson, a gentleman whose great intelligence and kindly manners secured him the respect of all who had the pleasure of making his personal acquaintance. I believe I was the first person in England who privately witnessed the Davenport manifestations; and I afterwards arranged the two first *séances* given to a number of city gentlemen, at the Hanover-square Rooms, in September, 1864, when I added "my testimony to the undoubted genuineness" of the whole exhibition. Since that period, the career of the Davenports has been an extraordinary and checkered one. The shameful conduct of the press of this country towards these young Americans, will, doubtless, be fresh in the recollection of every one. But, supported by the conscious integrity of their remarkable medium powers, they have boldly held their own.

As I may not have the opportunity of again speaking of the Davenports in this magazine, I desire to convey, to those of my friends in America who introduced them to me, the assurance of my conviction that the brothers' mission to Europe has been of great service to spiritualism; that their public conduct as mediums (in which relation I alone know them) has been steady and unexceptionable, and that though certain developments may have taken place in America since their departure, which, in some few instances, appear to surpass the manifestations obtained through the Davenports, *none can be more convincing*, — none, that I am aware of, so well adapted for a large audience.

As I had the responsibility of first indorsing the reality and wonderful character of the phenomena produced through the agency of the Davenports in England, so it becomes a duty for me to say now, that I have had no reason whatever to change my opinion of the genuine and marvellous character of their mediumship, which is entirely free from the imputation of trickery and bad faith of any kind.

BENJ. COLEMAN.

Mr. Robert Cooper of London, a sincere and disinter-

ested investigator, and who accompanied the Davenports to Ireland, Scotland, Belgium, and Germany, solely in the pursuit of truth, writes as follows: "I have been intimately associated with the Davenports for seven months. I have witnessed the manifestations under a variety of circumstances, — in the dark and in the light, in public and in private, — and I have never seen any indication whatever of the slightest approach to trickery. On the contrary, I have seen much to convince me of the absence of any thing of the kind. For instance, I have seen lights struck, contrary to regulations, when the instruments were sounding and floating in the air; but no one was discovered out of his place, the only result being the falling of the guitars to the ground."

The numerous charlatans who attacked these mediums, and said, "they knew how the Davenport tricks were done," did not take advantage of their re-appearance in London to expose them. A Mr. Thomas Joseph Lee was so far deluded by the misrepresentations of "the fraternity," that he sent the Davenports a challenge in the following terms: He (Mr. Lee) agreed to pay the Davenports their usual fee, provided he might furnish his own cabinet, ropes, and musical instruments; to select his own time and place for an exhibition; and invite his own friends only, who were to be chiefly members of the press.

The Davenports at once accepted Mr. Lee's challenge, and *found him out*. He was only playing at "brag;" and, though he lost the game, we are told he did not pay the stakes; and thus he left the Davenports to add this to the numerous instances they have of an Englishman's notion of "fair play."

It would be well for those who are likely to be duped by such professional braggarts to read the following letters of gentlemen who have no superiors as experts in the art of legerdemain in Paris; namely, M. Hamilton, a professor of

the art, and M. Rhys, a manufacturer of conjuring implements. M. Rhys is the maker of all the articles used by the well-known Robert Houdin, who is himself the inventor and originator of almost the whole of the tricks performed by the less accomplished jugglers, and who declared, some time since, that nothing in the magic art could account for the so-called spiritual phenomena which he had witnessed. The letters alluded to were published in the "Gazette des Étrangers," in Paris, on the 27th of September, 1865, and are as follows:—

MESSRS. DAVENPORTS, — Yesterday I had the pleasure of being present at the *séance* you gave, and I came away from it convinced that jealousy alone was the cause of the outcry raised against you. The phenomena produced surpassed my expectations, and your experiments were full of interest for me. I consider it my duty to add that those phenomena are inexplicable; and the more so by such persons as have thought themselves able to guess your supposed secret, and who are, in fact, far indeed from having discovered the truth.

HAMILTON.

MESSRS. DAVENPORT, — I have returned from one of your *séances* quite astonished. Like all other persons, I was admitted to examine your cabinet and instruments. I went through that examination with the greatest care, but failed to discover any thing that could justify legitimate suspicions. From that moment, I felt that the insinuations cast about you were but false and malevolent. I must also declare that your cabinet, being completely isolated, all participation in the manifestation of your phenomena by strangers is absolutely impossible; that the knots are made by persons selected indiscriminately; and that the public has been admitted to watch them: and I shall add, that, under these conditions, no one has ever yet produced any thing similar to the phenomena I witnessed.

RHYS.

Three months in London, during which the attendance at their *séances* demonstrated that their popularity was undiminished, completed the four years of their public life in Europe. The result of their presence in so many of the great centres of civilization and influence, before so many thousands of the most eminent leaders of thought and prog-

ress in the world, thereby enabling the most important phenomena of the century to challenge accurate observation and inquiry, no man can estimate.

Reaching the public mind by other avenues than the ordinary religious channels (in method of presentation by the instruments employed), and of essentially different character, the "manifestations" through the Davenport brothers have probably done more to attract attention, and stimulate thought concerning man's actual relations to a spiritual world and a future life, than all the routine of formal ceremonies and solemn ordinances inherited from antiquity, and observed as sacred by the religionists of to-day. Superficial minds may have deemed the phenomena puerile, and unworthy of attention by either the man of science or the man of religion; but the profounder intuition of great souls will recognize in these manifestations the presence of an *intelligent force* that is to guide all men from the world of matter to the world of spirit, and eventually harmonize science and religion.

Having faithfully discharged the duty devolving upon them as mediums of the spirit world, under circumstances calculated to dishearten any but brave men; having passed through every conceivable ordeal which human ingenuity could devise to test the genuineness of their claims; having baffled their enemies, and made hosts of grateful friends,—they now turned their faces homeward, with hearts full of yearning love for their native land.

Both the brothers had shown their appreciation of the ripe Old World which they had been visiting by taking to themselves wives from the fair daughters of France and Poland. Ira Erastus was married, at Paris, to Miss Louisa Toulet, in April, 1866. William Henry Harrison and Matilda May were married in 1867, at Königsberg, Prussia.

Embarking with their families at Glasgow, after a prosperous voyage they landed in New York, Aug. 29, 1868.

The following letter, published in "The Banner of Light," the leading spiritual paper of America, soon after the return of the brothers, fully explains its object and the necessity of its publication. With it we may properly close this autobiographical sketch of a career of usefulness, not yet, we trust, for many years to be terminated.

DEAR BANNER,— Before leaving Europe, rumors from time to time reached us from this country, that many of the American newspapers, taking the cue from their equally truth-loving brethren of the English press, were representing us as having "given up all pretensions to being spiritualists," and that we simply claimed to be skilful jugglers. Now, these statements, as ridiculous as they are false, we treated with silent contempt, thinking them unworthy of notice.

We did believe that our career as mediums for the past fourteen years was sufficient answer to all such reports; but we find that these statements, which are being daily repeated by the press, taken in connection with the treacherous and disgraceful conduct of certain physical mediums, are having an influence not only with the general public, but with many simple-minded spiritualists. It is singular that any individual, skeptic or spiritualist, could believe such statements after fourteen years of the most bitter persecution and violent opposition, culminating in the riots of Liverpool, Huddersfield, and Leeds, where our lives were placed in imminent peril by the fury of brutal mobs, our property destroyed, and where we suffered a loss of seventy-five thousand dollars, and all because *we would not renounce spiritualism*, and declare ourselves jugglers, when threatened by the mob, and urged to do so. In conclusion, we have only to say, that we denounce all such statements as base falsehoods.

IRA ERASTUS DAVENPORT.  
WM. H. DAVENPORT.

BUFFALO, N.Y., Oct. 23, 1868.

THE END.



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